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NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

COSTELLO, SHADES & DRAPES '79 / Photography PENNIE SMITH

COSTELLO
A CAREER

Rock Biz Manoeuvres & Emotional Fascism

By NICK KENT

Pages 24-26

THE PUBLISHERS REGRET THAT SOME ADVERTISEMENTS IN THIS ISSUE HAVE HAD TO BE OMITTED

WANT A JUICY RED SLICE OF HOT, FRESH

Meat Loaf?

JUST RING 01-493 7232 AND LISTEN

FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending January 29, 1979

Last Week	This Week		
2	1	TIGER FEET	Mud (Rak)
1	2	TEENAGE RAMPAGE	Sweet (RCA)
13	3	HOW COME	Ronnie Lane(GM)
5	4	DANCE WITH THE DEVIL	Cozy Powell (Rak)
8	5	SOLITAIRE	Andy Williams (CBS)
4	6	THE SHOW MUST GO ON	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)
3	7	YOU WON'T FIND ANOTHER FOOL LIKE ME	New Seekers(Polydor)
12	8	ALL OF MY LIFE	Diana Ross (Tamla Motown)
6	9	RADAR LOVE	Golden Earring (Track)
9	10	FOREVER	Roy Wood (Harvest)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending January 29th, 1969

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	ALBATROSS	Fleetwood Mac (Blue Horizon)
2	2	OB-LA-DI OB-LA-DA	Marmalade (CBS)
3	3	FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE	Stevie Wonder (Tamla Motown)
8	4	BLACKBERRY WAY	Move (Regal Zonophone)
4	5	SOMETHING'S HAPPENING	Herman's Hermits (Columbia)
7	6	PRIVATE NUMBER	William Bell & Judy Clay (Stax)
9	7	FOX ON THE RUN	Manfred Mann (Fontana)
12	8	YOU GOT SOUL	Johnny Nash (Major Minor)
6	9	LILY THE PINK	Scaffold (Parlophone)
5	10	BUILD ME UP BUTTERCUP	Foundations (Pye)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 31, 1964

Last Week	This Week		
18	1	NEEDLES AND PINS	Searchers (Pye)
2	2	HIPPY HIPPY SHAKE	Swinging Blue Jeans(HMV(
1	3	GLAD ALL OVER	Dave Clark Five (Columbia)
13	4	I'M THE ONE	Gerry and the Pacemakers (Columbia)
7	5	TWENTY-FOUR HOURS FROM TULSA	Gene Pitney (united Artists)
3	6	I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND	Beatles (Parlophone)
6	7	I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU	Dusty Springfield (Philips)
8	8	STAY	Hollies (Parlophone)
11	8	DON'T BLAME ME	Frank Ifield (Columbia)
17	10	AS USUAL	Brenda Lee (Brunswick)

CHARTS

SINGLES

Week ending January 27, 1979

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(2)	HIT ME WITH YOUR RHYTHM STICK	Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	6	1
2	(1)	Y.M.C.A.	Village People (Mercury)	8	1
3	(6)	SEPTEMBER	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	5	3
4	(8)	A LITTLE MORE LOVE	Olivia Newton-John (EMI)	5	4
5	(7)	HELLO THIS IS JOANIE	Paul Evans (Spring)	4	5
6	(3)	LAY YOUR LOVE ON ME	Racey (RAK)	7	3
7	(5)	LE FREAK	Chic (Atlantic)	9	5
8	(18)	CAR 67	Driver 67 (Logo)	2	8
9	(12)	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE	Funkadelic (Warner Bros)	7	11
10	(4)	SONG FOR GUY	Elton John (Rocket)	7	2
11	(—)	WOMAN IN LOVE	Three Degrees (Ariola)	1	11
12	(14)	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	Barry White (20th Century)	3	12
13	(11)	I'M EVERY WOMAN	Chaka Khan (Warner Bros)	7	11
14	(23)	MIRRORS	Sally Oldfield (Bronze)	5	14
15	(19)	RAMA LAMA DING DONG	Rocky Sharpe & The Replays (Chiswick)	2	15
16	(16)	I'LL PUT YOU TOGETHER AGAIN	Hot Chocolate (Rak)	7	13
17	(10)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN	Bee Gees (RSO)	8	4
18	(21)	MY LIFE	Billy Joel (CBS)	5	18
19	(—)	DON'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA	Shadows (EMI)	1	19
20	(29)	THIS IS IT	Dan Hartman (Blue Sky)	2	20
21	(9)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Barbra Streisand/Neil Diamond (CBS)	7	4
22	(22)	TAKE THAT TO THE BANK	Shalamar (RCA)	2	22
23	(26)	YOU NEEDED ME	Anne Murray (Capitol)	3	22
24	(25)	COOL MEDITATION	Third World (Island)	2	24
25	(—)	HEART OF GLASS	Blondie (Chrysalis)	1	25
26	(30)	EVERY NIGHT	Phoebe Snow (CBS)	2	26
27	(—)	GOT MY MIND MADE UP	Instant Funk (Salsoul)	1	27
28	(20)	DR WHO	Mankind (Pinnacle)	7	20
29	(15)	I LOST MY HEART TO A STARSHIP TROOPER	Sarah Brightman & Hot Gossip (Ariola Hansa)	9	6
30	(17)	A TASTE OF AGGRO	Barron Knights (Epic)	7	3

BUBBLING UNDER . . .

KING ROCKER — Generation X (Chrysalis); DANCE (Disco Heat) — Sylvester (Fantasy).

U.S. SINGLES

Week ending January 27, 1979

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	LE FREAK	Chic
2	(2)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN	Bee Gees
3	(4)	Y.M.C.A.	Village People
4	(13)	DO YA THINK I'M SEXY	Rod Stewart
5	(5)	HOLD THE LINE	Toto
6	(6)	SEPTEMBER	Earth, Wind & Fire
7	(7)	OOH BABY BABY	Linda Ronstadt
8	(9)	A LITTLE MORE LOVE	Olivia Newton-John
9	(10)	EVERY I's A WINNER	Hot Chocolate
10	(12)	FIRE	Pointer Sisters
11	(3)	MY LIFE	Billy Joel
12	(14)	LOTTA LOVE	Nicolette Larson
13	(16)	GOT TO BE REAL	Cheryl Lynn
14	(8)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Barbra & Neil
15	(20)	SHAKE IT	Ian Matthews
16	(21)	SOUL MAN	Blues Brothers
17	(19)	NEW YORK GROOVE	Ace Frehley
18	(11)	WE'VE GOT TONITE	Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band
19	(22)	I WAS MADE FOR DANCIN'	Leif Garrett
20	(25)	SOMEWHERE IN THE NIGHT	Barry Manilow
21	(24)	DON'T HOLD BACK	Chanson
22	(15)	PROMISES	Eric Clapton
23	(27)	DON'T CRY OUT LOUD	Melisa Manchester
24	(29)	HOME AND DRY	Gerry Rafferty
25	(28)	THE GAMBLER	Kenny Rogers
26	(17)	SHARING THE NIGHT TOGETHER	Dr Hook
27	(—)	SHATTERED	Rolling Stones
28	(—)	BLUE MORNING, BLUE DAY	Foreigner
29	(—)	LOVE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE	Rose Royce
30	(—)	NO TELL LOVER	Chicago

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

ALBUMS

Week ending January 27, 1979

This Week	Last Week			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(2)	DON'T WALK, BOOGIE	Various (EMI)	4	1
2	(3)	THE SINGLES 1974-1978	Carpenters (A&M)	8	2
3	(9)	WINGS GREATEST	Wings (Parlophone)	5	3
4	(1)	SHOWADDYWADDY'S GREATEST HITS 1976-1978	(Arista)	7	1
5	(16)	PARALLEL LINES	Blondie (Chrysalis)	15	5
6	(18)	ACTION REPLAY	Various (K-Tel)	2	6
7	(26)	ARMED FORCES	Elvis Costello (Radar)	2	7
8	(10)	A SINGLE MAN	Elton John (Rocket)	12	5
8	(4)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN	Rod Stewart (Riva)	8	2
10	(12)	GREASE	Original Soundtrack (RSO)	28	1
11	(17)	THE BEST OF EARTH WIND AND FIRE VOL 1	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	3	11
12	(7)	NIGHT FLIGHT TO VENUS	Boney M (Int Hansa)	27	1
13	(5)	MIDNIGHT HUSTLE	Various (K-Tel)	8	3
14	(20)	EQUINOXE	Jean Michel Jarre (Polydor)	5	14
15	(6)	NEIL DIAMOND'S 20 GOLDEN GREATS	Neil Diamond (MCA)	10	1
16	(8)	WAR OF THE WORLDS	Jeff Wayne (CBS)	29	2
17	(14)	TONIC FOR THE TROOPS	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	23	4
18	(—)	OUT OF THE BLUE	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	55	3
19	(27)	NEW BOOTS & PANTIES	Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	36	5
20	(22)	20 GOLDEN GREATS	Doris Day (Warwick)	2	20
21	(23)	GIVE 'EM ENOUGH ROPE	Clash (CBS)	9	3
22	(24)	NIGHT GALLERY	Barron Knights (Epic)	6	10
23	(29)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Neil Diamond (CBS)	3	14
24	(13)	EMOTIONS	Various (K-Tel)	12	2
25	(—)	EVEN NOW	Barry Manilow (Arista)	2	25
26	(19)	INCANTATIONS	Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	5	14
27	(25)	LIONHEART	Kate Bush (EMI)	9	12
28	(28)	JAZZ	Queen (EMI)	10	6
29	(21)	GREATEST HITS	Commodores (Motown)	4	21
30	(30)	DREAM MUSIC	Various (Lotus)	2	30

BUBBLING UNDER . . .

THREE LIGHT YEARS — Electric Light Orchestra (Jet); GHOST RIDERS IN THE SKY — Slim Whitman (United Artists).

U.S. ALBUMS

Week ending January 27, 1979

This Week	Last Week		
1	(3)	BRIEFCASE FULL OF BLUES	Blues Brothers
2	(1)	52nd STREET	Billy Joel
3	(2)	BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL. 2	
4	(6)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN	Rod Stewart
5	(5)	GREATEST HITS	Barry Manilow
6	(4)	A WILD & CRAZY GUY	Steve Martin
7	(7)	GREASE	Various Artists
8	(8)	THE BEST OF EARTH, WIND & FIRE VOL. 1	
9	(9)	C'EST CHIC	Chic
10	(10)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS	Neil Diamond
11	(13)	TOTO	Toto
12	(11)	DOUBLE VISION	Foreigner
13	(17)	TOTALLY HOT	Olivia Newton-John
14	(15)	CRUISIN'	Village People
15	(12)	BACKLESS	Eric Clapton
16	(16)	LIVING IN THE U.S.A.	Linda Ronstadt
17	(14)	JAZZ	Queen
18	(19)	MOTOR BOOTY AFFAIR	Parliament
19	(18)	LIVE AND MORE	Donna Summer
20	(29)	MINUTE BY MINUTE	Doobie Brothers
21	(20)	SOME GIRLS	Rolling Stones
22	(22)	GREATEST HITS 1974-1978	Steve Miller Band
23	(23)	PIECES OF EIGHT	Styx
24	(—)	NICOLETTE	Nicolette Larson
25	(21)	WINGS GREATEST	Wings
26	(27)	DOG & BUTTERFLY	Heart
27	(—)	BACK TO EARTH	Cat Stevens
28	(28)	THE STRANGER	Billy Joel
29	(26)	LIVE BOOTLEG	Aerosmith
30	(—)	STRANGER IN TOWN	Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

NEWS
by Derek Johnson

A LENE TIME ON THE ROAD

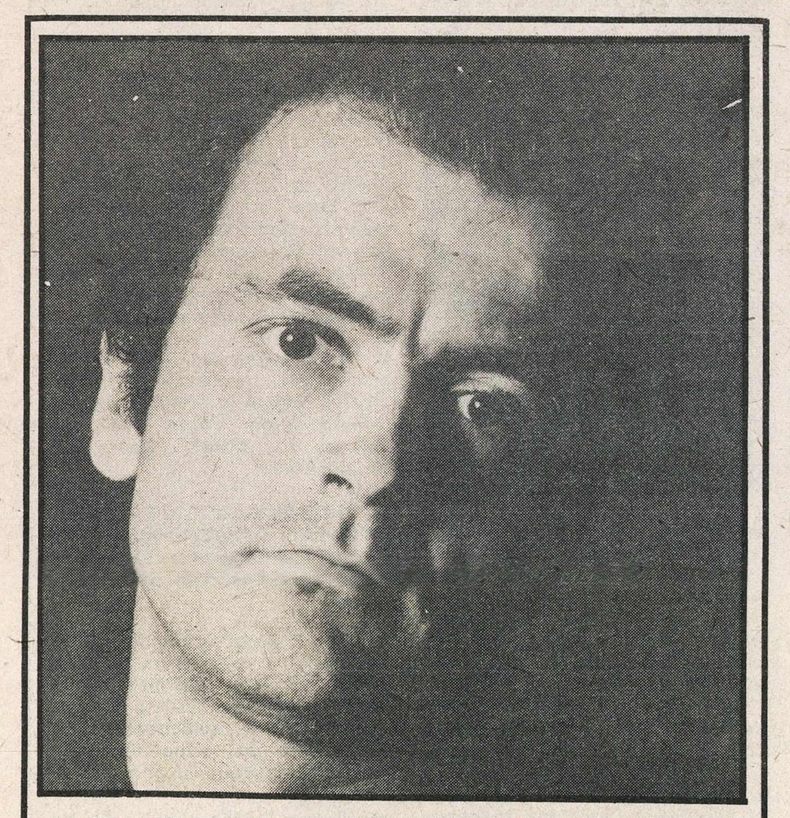
LENE LOVICH, who made her British debut in the autumn as part of the five-act "Be Stiff" package, is now set for her first headlining tour of this country — backed by her own band, which has been completely revamped since she last performed here. As a prelude, Stiff release her new 12-inch single on "February 2 titled "Lucky Number", and coupled with "Home" and an instrumental version of the A-side. The normal retail price of Stiff 12-inchers is £1.40 but, in this instance, the first 10,000 copies will sell at 90p.

Lene plays Aberdeen University (February 9), Fife St. Andrew's University (11), Edinburgh Tiffany's (12), Liverpool University (14), Loughborough University (17), Bradford University (21), Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic (22), Coventry Warwick University (23), Sheffield University (24), Exeter Routes (26), Plymouth Metro (27) and Manchester University (March 3). Many more dates have still to be confirmed.

● Stiff describe Lene as "the Yugoslavian female sax player-singer-composer-lyricist who was born in Detroit and moved to London by way of France and Finland". . .

AND LOOK OUT FOR SKIDS. . .

THE SKIDS go out on tour at the end of next month, coinciding with the February 23 release by Virgin of their first album "Scared To Dance", pressed in blue vinyl. They play Newport Stowaway (February 28), Cardiff Glamis Club (March 1), Bristol University (2), York Pop Club (7), Leeds Fan Club (8), Birmingham Barbarella's (9), Plymouth Polytechnic (10), Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (14), Sheffield Limit Club (15), Hull Technical College (16), Liverpool Eric's (17), Edinburgh Tiffany's (19) and Aberdeen City Hall (21). A single taken from the LP, titled "Into The Valley", comes out on February 9 — and the previous evening the band play a special gig at London Marquee.



CORNWELL'S SOLO DEBUT

HUGH CORNWELL is following in the footsteps of his Stranglers colleague Jean Jacques Burnel by recording a solo album. During the Christmas period, he completed seven tracks in four different Los Angeles studios, and he hopes to finish it in time for June release.

On the tracks already cut, Cornwell is featured on vocals, bass, guitar, synthesiser and mellotron, aided by Captain Beefheart's drummer Robert Williams. The music is considerably different from the acknowledged Stranglers approach and, in fact, features several South American percussion instruments!

Producer is Frank Zappa's engineer Joe Chicorelli, and among the songs are "Big Bug" which is about Trotsky's train during its two-year tour of Russia; and "Wrong Way Round", concerning a girl who's been built upside down. . .

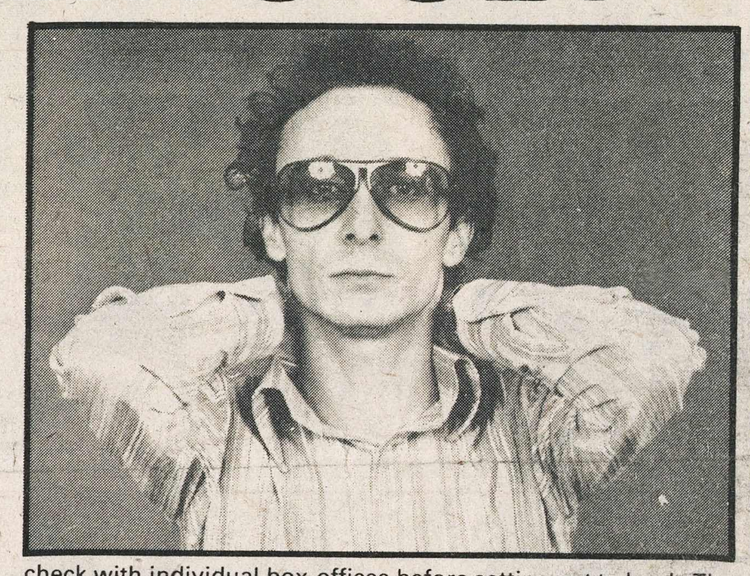
There are no plans for him to perform any of the songs live, as part of The Stranglers' stage show. But it's understood that Burnel is working on arrangements of some of the numbers on his solo set "Euroman Cometh", with a view to having his own spot in the act. Meanwhile the live Stranglers album "X-Cert" is also due out shortly.

PARKER & RUMOUR: 24 CONCERTS SET

GRAHAM PARKER & The Rumour return to the UK circuit at the end of next month, playing two dozen major dates, climaxing in a brace of concerts at London's Hammersmith Odeon. They'll have a new album and single released by Phonogram to tie in with the tour, while The Rumour also have their own LP coming out on Stiff Records on February 16 titled "Frogs, Sprouts, Clogs & Krauts" (preceded next weekend by the single "Frozen Years").

Their full tour schedule is Cardiff University (February 28), Sheffield City Hall (March 2), Liverpool Empire (3), Newcastle City Hall (5), Edinburgh Odeon (6), Aberdeen Capitol (7), Glasgow Apollo (8), Lancaster University (10), Leeds University (11), Bristol Colston Hall (12), Exeter University (10), Leeds University (11), Bristol Colston Hall (12), Exeter University (13), Bradford St. George's Hall (15), Manchester Apollo (16), Birmingham Odeon (19), Ipswich Gaumont (21), Portsmouth Guildhall (22), Brighton Centre (24), Reading Hexagon Theatre (25), Leicester De Montfort Hall (26), Derby Assembly Rooms (28), Ilford Odeon (29), Oxford New Theatre (April 1) and London Hammersmith Odeon (2 and 3).

Tour promoter is Harvey Goldsmith, who has yet to name a support act. Ticket prices are £3, £2.50 and £2 — except at Hammersmith (£3.50, £3 and £2.50) and all the university dates (£2). Most ticket offices are already open, but it's advisable to check with individual box-offices before setting out to book. The Rumour are Bob Andrews (keyboards and vocals), Martin Belmont (guitar and vocals), Brinsley Schwarz (guitar and vocals), Andrew Bodnar (bass) and Steve Goulding (drums).



Roxy for Hammersmith

ROXY MUSIC, whose reunion plans were exclusively revealed by NME in November, begin their comeback tour with a string of British concert appearances in mid-spring. Provincial dates are still being finalised, but it's understood that the highlight of their itinerary is on May 16 and 17 when they play two nights at London's Hammersmith Odeon.

Original plans were for Roxy to begin a world tour — taking in Britain, Europe, America, Japan and Australia — this month. But this has now been slightly delayed, and it looks as though they'll be starting their travels in this country, with their reunion album released to coincide with their dates. As already reported, original members Bryan Ferry, Phil Manzanera, Andy Mackay and Paul Thompson are joined in the new-look line-up by ex-Vibrators bassist Gary Tibbs, with a keyboards player still to be named.

As a prelude to these activities, Roxy's comeback single is released by Polydor on February 9, titled "Trash".

SOFTIES KEEP THEIR HEAVYWEIGHT IMAGE

THE SOFTIES have undergone a line-up change just before their tour with Wreckless Eric, reported last week — drummer Keith Line has left to join Orphan, and he's replaced by George Butler from The Lightning Raiders. Butler maintains their image of being the heaviest band in Britain, with each member weighing at least 16-stone! During their tour with Eric, they'll be promoting their new Charly Records album "Nice And Nasty" (out on February 9), as well as their newly-released single taken from it titled "Killing Time In Soho".

And The Softies have challenged The Boomtown Rats to a "Battle Of The Bands" at any London venue they care to nominate. They claim that the Rats have been getting more publicity than they deserve, and reckon they could "blow them off stage any time". It remains to be seen if the Rats will respond.

● The Passage have acquired a new drummer in Karl Burns, who recently left The Fall. The Manchester band, whose new single "New Love Songs" has just been issued by Object Records, are currently rehearsing with a view to going on the road shortly.

THE LURKERS, currently being lined up for their first European tour, have their next album "God's Lonely Men" scheduled for April release by Beggar's Banquet — almost a year after their "Fulham Fallout" set.

CHELSEA, who were forced to postpone their projected pre-Christmas U.S. visit due to visa problems, now begin a two-week American tour on February 11. As a warm-up, they play London Camden Music Machine on February 1, supported by U.K. Subs and Raped. They've spent the last fortnight laying down tracks for their new Step Forward Records album.

THE DAMNED have further one-nighters at Glasgow Queen Margaret Union (January 27), Wolverhampton Rollerdrome (February 2) and Manchester Factory (3).

NEWS WAVES

Buzzcocks single and March gigs

THE BUZZCOCKS are back in the studios this weekend recording a new single with producer Martin Rushent — it's the Pete Shelley song "Everybody's Happy Nowadays", and it's planned for late February release by United Artists. In early March, the band set out on their first major European tour — involving 12 dates in seven countries during 19 days, and 3,000 miles of travelling. On their return to Britain, they're planning to play three or four dates towards the end of March, but details are not yet finalised.

Gen X keep prices down

GENERATION X's second album "Valley Of The Dolls", produced by Ian Hunter, has had its release date brought forward by Chrysalis and now comes out tomorrow (Friday). The retail price has deliberately been kept down to £4.19, some 30 and 40p cheaper than the normal cost of an LP, which the band feel is "outrageous". They have also added another date to their February tour, at Ayr Pavilion (19), while their show the previous evening (18) is switched from St. Andrew's University to Dundee University.

ADAM & THE ANTS have added High Wycombe Town Hall (February 2) and Chelmsford Chancellor Hall (4) to their current gig series. Their Manchester venue tomorrow (Friday) is switched from the Russell Club to the Mayflower.

SMALL WONDER Records stage a five-act package show at London Camden Music Machine next Monday (29). Taking part are Patrik Fitzgerald, The Molesters, The Wall and Nicky & The Dots.

Six concerts in March

URIAH DATES

URIAH HEEP headline a string of six major concerts in early March, their first British gigs for almost two years.

The dates, which follow their current European tour, are Birmingham Odeon (March 2), Manchester Apollo (3), Newcastle City Hall (4), Edinburgh Usher Hall (5), London Hammersmith Odeon (7) and Brighton Dome (8). Tickets are on sale now priced £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2 (Hammersmith); and £2.80, £2.20 and £1.75 (elsewhere). Promoters are Kennedy Street Enterprises in association with Neil Warnock of the Bron Agency.

The band say they are restricted to six U.K. dates at this time because, immediately after the Brighton gig, they're leaving for the States to fulfil extensive commitments over there. But they say they're hoping to arrange further British shows later in the year, and a comprehensive U.K. tour is planned for 1980 as part of their tenth anniversary world tour.

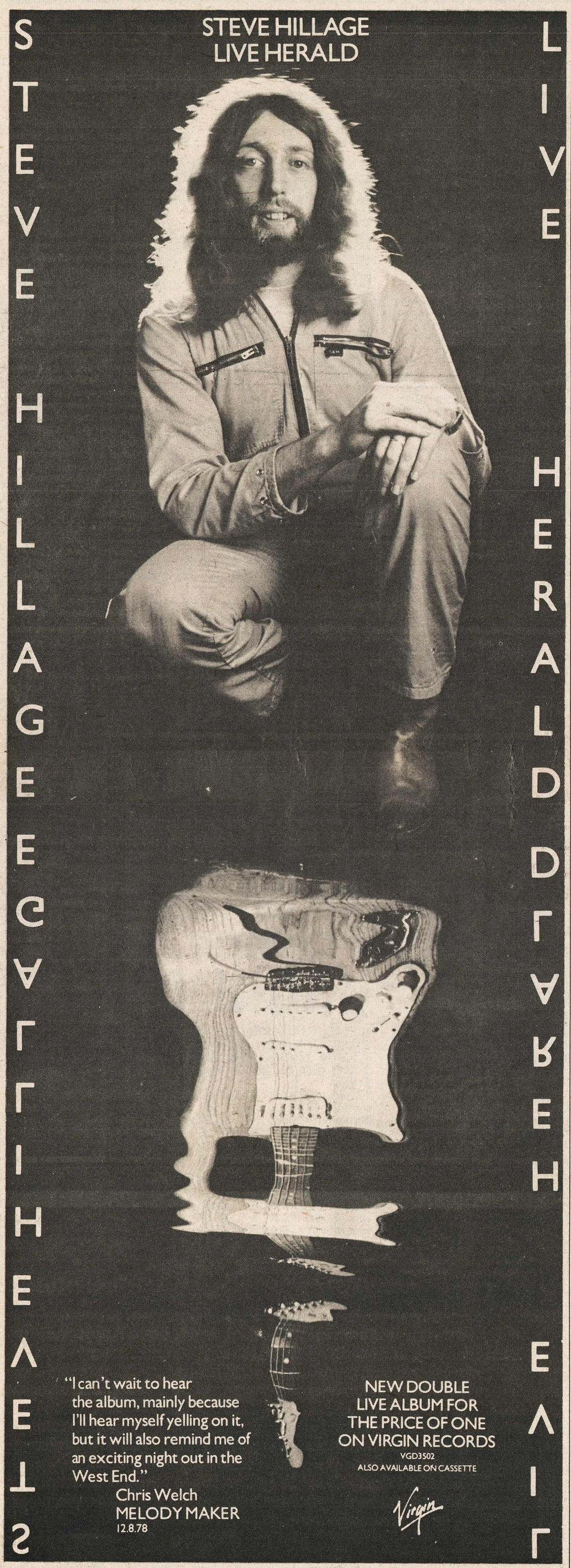
Demise of Penthouse

ONE OF THE North of England's top rock clubs, The Penthouse in Scarborough, is to close in the early spring. It first opened its doors on April 19, 1969, and has presented such big names as David Bowie, Eric Clapton and Manfred Mann. Now there are plans for it to stage its final gig on its tenth anniversary night. Reason for the closure is that owner Peter Adams has decided to quit the music scene, though his subsequent plans are unknown. Nor is there any indication that some other benefactor is prepared to take over the venue.

HOT RODS LINING UP THREE DOZEN SHOWS

EDDIE & THE HOT RODS' tour, starting towards the end of next month, is expected to be even longer than their lengthy outing last spring. It will comprise 35 or 36 dates, starting in late February with a string of college and university dates, then moving into the theatre circuit in March. A spokesman for the band said that their full itinerary will be announced soon.

● Transatlantic artists due to visit Britain in the early spring, according to their respective tour promoters, include Bootsy's Rubber Band (March), the J. Geils Band (April) and Rush (April and May). And it's understood that negotiations are under way for The Tubes to return in May.


STEVE HILLAGE
LIVE HERALD
STEVE HILLAGE LIVE HERALD
"I can't wait to hear the album, mainly because I'll hear myself yelling on it, but it will also remind me of an exciting night out in the West End."
Chris Welch
MELODY MAKER
12.8.78
NEW DOUBLE LIVE ALBUM FOR THE PRICE OF ONE ON VIRGIN RECORDS
VGD3502
ALSO AVAILABLE ON CASSETTE
Virgin

PLAYING DARTS

19 gigs with new line-up

DATES AND VENUES have now been confirmed for the first British tour by Darts since their line-up changes which brought in two new members — Kenny Andrews (bass vocals) and Mike Deacon (keyboards). As a prelude to their outing, Magnet release the band's new single "Get It" tomorrow (Friday), and they spend the first half of next month working on their new album with producer Robert John Lang. Their itinerary comprises:

Canterbury Kent University (February 15), Sheffield University (16), Leeds University (17), Southport Theatre (18), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (19), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (21), Brighton Dome (22), Exeter University (23), Lancaster University (26), Newcastle City Hall (27), Glasgow Apollo (28), Middlesbrough Town Hall (March 1), Leicester De Montfort Hall (2), Bradford St. George's Hall (3), Portsmouth Guildhall (5), Oxford New Theatre (6), Ipswich Gaumont (7), Manchester Apollo (8) and London Rainbow Theatre (10).

Tickets for the Rainbow gig are on sale now priced £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2; for other dates, readers should contact the individual box-offices for booking details. Tour promoters are the MAM Organisation, who have yet to announce a support act. After the tour Darts finish off their new LP then leave for an extensive European tour.

RECORD NEWS

Rod's latest

ROD STEWART's follow-up to his chart-topping single "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy" is released by Riva Records this weekend. Titled "Ain't Love A Bitch", it's again taken from his hit album "Blondes Have More Fun", which has now achieved Platinum sales.

● **The Guess Who** have signed with Hilltak Records, distributed in Britain by Atlantic. And **Martin Mull** has been captured by Elektra/Asylum. Both acts will have new releases out shortly.

● The Alien Record Company (distributed by Spartan) this week releases "Alright On The Night" by **The Rivvits** as a collector's flexidisc. It's a limited edition of 5,000 numbered copies, pressed in picture disc form with the lyrics printed on the vinyl.

● **Tronics** have a single coming out on their own label (distrubuted through Rough Trade) coupling "Suzie's Vibrator" and "Favourite Girls". And Liverpool band **Geisha Girls** are recording tracks for a single to be released on Skeleton Records.

● **Crystal Gayle's** new single, rushed out this weekend by United Artists and taken from her current album "When I Dream", is titled "Why Have You Left The One You Left Me For?"

● People Unite, the independent musicians' co-operative, release their third single this week — "In A Rut" by **The Ruts.** Their first two singles were by reggae band Misty.

BEE GEES ELPEE

THE BEE GEES have their first studio album for two years released by RSO Records on February 9, titled "Spirits Having Flown". A single extracted from it, called "Tragedy", is issued simultaneously. The group, who expect to make some British concert appearances later in the year, are already working on a follow-up album.

● **Motorhead** have a new album due out in March called "Overkill", which they've just finished recording with ex-Stones producer Jimmy Miller. A single from the LP, possibly the title track, will be issued at the same time.

● RSO Records have signed their first British band for four years. They are Edinburgh-based outfit **Head Boys,** who begin recording their debut album next month, under the supervision of Motors producer Pete Ker.

● **Earthbound** are currently recording a 12-inch single — comprising "Liberated Lady", "Becoming Me" and "The Robot" — which is planned for March 1 release as the first product on their own Archway Records label. The band — who've just brought in ex-Fabulous Poodles member Mike Morgan on keyboards, mandolin and guitar — begin a new series of gigs at London Hampstead Westfield College this Saturday (27).

● **Catherine Howe** — who, as previously reported, goes out on tour next month, supporting Chris De Burgh — has a new single titled "Move On Over" out this week as the first release under her new deal with Ariola. It's taken from her "Dragonfly Days" album.

● **Cliff Richard & The Shadows'** live album, recorded during their London Palladium season last year, is released by EMI on February 2.

● **Meatloaf** have the title track from their hit album "Bat Out Of Hell" released as a 12-inch red-vinyl single tomorrow (Friday) on Epic. Out the same day are "Don't Stop Me Now" by **Queen** (EMI), "Gimmix!" by **John Cooper Clarke** (CBS), "True Love" by **Jilted John** (EMI International) and "Superman" by **The Kinks** (Arista).

● Maintaining their successful policy of releasing classic soundtrack material as singles, United Artists have now come up with three songs by the near-legendary **Marilyn Monroe,** taken from her movie "Some Like It Hot". They are "I Wanna Be Loved By You", "Runnin' Wild" and "I'm Thru With Love", and the first 20,000 copies are issued in a full-colour picture gatefold sleeve. It's out this weekend, with the release of the album "Some Like It Hot" to follow in late February.

Reduction in album costs

PHONOGRAM are reducing the price of all their current full-price albums, except for brand new releases — and they, too, will be reduced periodically. The campaign is called "Going For A Song", and is a rare instance of the price spiral being reversed.

From February 1, all Phonogram's catalogue popular albums will be reduced from £4.35 to £3.75 (cassettes from £4.50 to £3.90), and this affects such artists as The Boomtown Rats, Status Quo, 10cc, Thin Lizzy, Graham Parker, Lindisfarne, Nazareth and The Stylistics. New release price is £4.35, but this is subject to eventual reduction in line with the rest of the catalogue.

CBS net Zappa

FRANK ZAPPA has signed with CBS Records after a nine-year relationship with Warner Brothers. The initial outcome of the deal will be the release of his double album "Sheik Your Booty", and CBS hope to have it in the shops in time for his British tour which — as reported last week — opens on February 11.

● **Bernie Torme Band** have their first EP released by Jet Records on February 8, comprising "Weekend", "Secret Service", "Instant Impact" and "All Night". Produced by lead guitarist and vocalist Torme, it retails at the regular singles price of 90p.

● Out this weekend on Decca is the single "Bristol Stomp" by The **Late Show.** First 10,000 copies are in a colour sleeve showing the steps of the dance, and all singles have a special centre label showing the more advanced steps.

● **Immigrant** this week began recording their first album for Different Records, scheduled for March release. A double A-sided single, "Someday My Love"/"Rivers Of Blood", precedes it next month.

● **Tribesman,** now with new rhythm guitarist Clive Symister replacing Matthew Hall, have their first album "Street Level" at final-mix stage with a view to March release by The Label's Boa outlet. And **Eater,** whose break-up was recently confirmed, will have a farewell LP issued by The Label in the spring — with the possibility of the band re-forming specially to do a series of farewell gigs.

● **Gerry Rafferty's** follow-up to his hugely successful "City To City" is now in its final mix. Provisionally titled "Night Owl", its planned for March release by United Artists.

● "Map Of India" is the first solo single from **Deke Leonard,** set for February 16 release by U-A. He's about to start work on a new solo album.

● Zoom Records' **Simple Minds** are about to start work on their debut LP with producer John Leckie, using the Rolling Stones' mobile. And fellow Scottish group **Zones** are preparing for their debut Arista album at The Manor.

● **Cheap Trick's** album "Dream Police", originally announced by Epic for February 9 release to coincide with their U.K. tour, has been put back until later in the year. Instead, that date now sees the issue of a limited edition yellow vinyl LP — recorded live in Japan — titled "Cheap Trick At The Budokan".

● Mancheser-based label TJM Records have just released their first single, "Man In The Box" by **V.2.** Upcoming within the next two weeks are four-track singles by **Slaughter & The Dogs** and **The Distractions,** and three-track singles by **Skrewdriver** and **The Frantic Elevators.**

● Out this week on United Artists are extended-version 12-inch singles by **Brass Construction** ("Help Yourself") and **Ronnie Laws** ("All For You"). Both are also available in shortened seven-inch form.

● West German label Sky has set up a U.K. distribution deal with Projection Records. Among initial releases within the next few weeks is "After The Heat", the new album by **Brian Eno** with Boebius and Roedelius.

NEWS BRIEFS

SHOWADDYWADDY appear at Nottingham Commodore Suite (tonight, Thursday), Croydon Fairfield Hall (this Sunday), Gloucester Leisure Centre (February 1), Bradford St. George's Hall (2), Milton Keynes Bletchley Leisure Festival (18), Stoke Jollees (20) and Birmingham Night Out (26 for a week).

FRANKIE MILLER, who was forced to cancel an appearance at Cromer West Runton Pavilion just before Christmas becuase he was suffering from a throat infection, has now re-scheduled this gig. He's there, together with Full House, this Saturday (27).

90° INCLUSIVE, headline at London Camden Music Machine on February 9, and among other gigs set for the group are Harrow College of Technology (tomorrow, Friday), Reading University (February 2), Hereford College (16), London Waltham Forest Technical College (17), and Cromer West Runton Pavilion (March 10).

SLEEPY LaBEEF, the American rockabilly singer and guitarist, is now confirmed for an appearance in the Wembley Country Music Festival on Easter Monday, April 16. While in the U.K., he'll also be recording a live album at a specially selected venue, as well as appearing on radio and TV.

HORSLIPS have made two additions to, and one cancellation from, their British concert tour itinerary reported two weeks ago. Out goes Keele University on February 14, but newly booked for next month are Redcar Coatham Bowl (11) and Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic (15).

ROY AYERS and his band Ubiquity have added another date to their debut U.K. visit, reported last week — at Purley Tiffany's on January 31. Tickets for their big London concert at Hammersmith Odeon on February 4 are now on sale, priced £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2.

OVAL STAGE SHOW — featuring The Secret, Shrink and Bobby Henry — has been set for three more London gigs. They are Walthamstow North-East Polytechnic (this Saturday), Camden Music Machie (January 30) and City Polytechnic (February 9). Bobby Henry's single "Headcase" is out this weekend, and The Secret's LP "Over The Top" on February 2, both on A&M.

BILL NELSON's Red Noise have made a couple of changes in their previously-reported debut tour itinerary. Their gig at Exeter University, planned for March 2, has been cancelled. And their show at Lancaster University is switched from March 9 to 16.

CRAZY CAVAN 'n' The Rhythm Rockers set out next month on their first visit to America, where they kick off in style with a three-night stint at the celebrated New York niterie Max's Kansas City, which is something of an achievement for a British rockabilly band! They're also being lined up for a string of dates in Canada.

CHRIS REA has been nominated by the American Music Industry for the Grammy Award as the best newcomer of 1978. The awards will be presented on February 15 in the States. And meanwhile Rea, who's currently recording his second album with producer Gus Dudgeon, is being lined up for a U.K. college tour in March.

THE OSMONDS are back in Britain for their first visit since 1975. They're playing a charity concert at London's Royal Albert Hall tonight (Thursday), then have two shows at London Rainbow (Friday and Saturday), followed by a solitary out-of-town gig at Manchester Apollo next Monday (29).

THIS HEAT re-open London's Screen On The Green in Islington as a rock venue with a late-night show tomorrow (Friday). Prior to the band's set there'll be a showing of Werner Herzog's film "Fata Morgana".

THE THREE DEGREES are back in Britain, this time to promote their new single "Woman In Love". They are also playing cabaret weeks at Wakefield Theatre Club (from this Sunday) and Manchester Golden Garter (from February 5).

STILL MORE TOURS

Richard & Linda

RICHARD & LINDA THOMPSON go back on the road next month, following their successful November tour. Their latest itinerary climaxes at London's The Venue in Victoria on February 24, and this is preceded by a string of provincial gigs — at Manchester University (7), Coventry Warwick University (8), Poole Arts Centre (10), Oxford Polytechnic (15), Bristol University (16), Colchester Essex University (17), Exeter University (19), Reading Hexagon Theatre (20), Keele University (21) and Newcastle University (22). The duo, who've now revised their act to include several new songs, are backed by their regular band of John Kirkpatrick, Dave Pegg, Sue Harris and Mike Arscott.

Bad Company

BAD COMPANY return to the British concert platform at the end of next month, for the first time in almost two years. They visit Newcastle City Hall (February 29 and March 1 and 2), Edinburgh Odeon (5), Glasgow Apollo (6 and 7), London Wembley Arena (9 and 10), Southampton Gaumont (13), Liverpool Empire (16). Bristol Colston Hall (18), Leicester Granby Hall (21), Brighton Centre (23), Birmingham Odeon (25 and 26), Sheffield City Hall (30) and Manchester Apollo (31 and April 1). Tickets go on sale this Saturday priced £3.50, £3 and £2.50 — except Wembley (£4.50 and £4) and Leicester (£3). A new Bad Company album will be released to coincide with the tour, title not yet set.

Supercharge

SUPERCHARGE have lined up a string of gigs, with the likelihood of more interim dates being added. So far confirmed are Bristol Brunel Technical College (tonight, Thursday), Nottingham University (this Saturday), Southampton University (February 10), Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (13), Wisbech College of Education (14), London Camden Music Machine (17) and Plymouth Polytechnic (20).

● THE ENID have added three more dates to their major British tour reported two weeks ago, and have switched their London concert at Hammersmith Odeon from February 28 to March 2. The extra gigs are Leicester Polytechnic (February 17), Swansea Brangwyn Hall (19) and Scarborough Royal Opera House (22).

● THE BISHOPS play London Kensington Nashville tomorrow (Friday), and next week begin an 11-day Irish tour, including Ulster gigs at Coleraine University (February 7) and Belfast Queen's University (8). They begin a new series of U.K. dates at Lampeter St. David's Univeristy on February 16.

Roy Hill Band

ROY HILL BAND begin another round-Britain trek this weekend, coinciding with the reissue of their Arista single "I Like, I Like, I Like". Dates so far set are Bath University (tomorrow, Friday) Bristol Polytechnic (Saturday), London Hammersmith Riverside Studios (Sunday), Retford Eaton College (February 1), Sheffield Tapton Hall College (2), Huddersfield Polytechnic (6), Swansea West Glamorgan Institute (8), Bangor Neuadd Rathbone Hall (9), London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (10), Bedford Cranfield Institute (13), Manchester University (14), Newcastle Polytechnic (16), Leeds Fforde Green Hotel (18), Portsmouth Polytechnic (21), Harlow Technical College (23) and London Twickenham West London Institute (24). More gigs are being confirmed through into March.

Ian Gillan

GILLAN (that's the Ian Gillan Band) have added another ten dates to their tour itinerary reported last week. They are Birmingham Barbarella's (this Saturday), Exeter Routes (January 29), Torquay 400 Club (30), Redcar Coatham Bowl (February 4), Sheffield Polytechnic (7), York University (8), Oldham Civic Centre (11), Blackburn King George's Hall (15), Uxbridge Brunel University (23) and Northampton County Ground (24). There have also been a couple of venue changes — the gig on February 2 is switched from Newcastle Mayfair to Sunderland Top Rank, and on February 14 from Keele University to Birkenhead Hamilton Club. Support act for the entire tour is Marseille.

Crown Heights

CROWN HEIGHTS AFFAIR, the U.S. disco outfit who registered strongly in the NME Chart a few months ago with their Mercury single "Galaxy Of Love", begin their second British tour this weekend — highlighted by a major London concert at the Hammersmith Odeon. Dates are Dunstable California (this Saturday), Cardiff Top Rank (January 31), Poole Arts Centre (February 1), London Southgate Royalty (2), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (3), Southend Talk Of The South (5), London Hammersmith Odeon (8), Slough Community Centre (9), Manchester Apollo (10), Liverpool Royal Court Theatre (11), Middlesbrough Madison (12) and Newcastle Madison (13). Hammersmith tickets cost £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2, and elsewhere they range from £2.50 to £1.50.

Roger Chapman

ROGER CHAPMAN, former linchpin of Family and Streetwalkers, launches his solo career next month. His first solo album "Chappo" is released by Acrobat Records through Arista on February 16, and the following week he sets out on a U.K. tour — backed by Mick Grabham (guitar), Tim Hinkley (keyboards), Rick Wills (bass), Stretch (drums), Raff Ravenscroft (sax) and backing singers yet to be named. Dates are Oxford Polytechnic (February 22), Birmingham Aston University (March 2), Glasgow Strathclyde University (3), Leicester University (6), Keele University (7), Bristol University (9), Manchester University (10) and London Stand Lyceum (13).

Joe Jackson

JOE JACKSON goes on the road this weekend to promote his upcoming album "Look Sharp", released by A&M on February 2, with a single to be extracted from it at the same time. Backed by his regular band of Graham Maby (bass and vocals), Dave Houghton (drums) and Gary Sanford (guitar), Jackson's "Be There And Spiv Tour" takes in Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), Huddersfield Polytechnic (Saturday), Edinburgh Tiffany's (January 29), Glasgow Tiffany's (30), London Camden Dingwalls (February 1), Scarborough Penthouse (2), High Wycombe Nags Head (8), London Marquee (9), Retford Porterhouse (10), Sheffield Limit Club (15), Birmingham Barbarella's (17), Southampton University (21), Leeds Fan Club (22), Beaconsfield North Staffs Polytechnic (23), Manchester Russell Club (24) and London Victoria The Venue (28).

White Horses

WHITE HORSES, Jimmy Bain and Brian Robertson's new band, play Portsmouth Polytechnic (tonight, Thursday), Egham Royal Holloway College (Friday), Reading Bulmershe College (Saturday), Sheffield Polytechnic (January 31), Newcastle University (February 3), Dumfries Stagecoach (4), Edinburgh Tiffany's (5), Newport Village Club (9), Manchester Mayflower (10), Basingstoke Technical College (16), Kingston Polytechnic (17), Blackpool Norbreck Castle (23), Glasgow Queen Margaret Union (24), Birkenhead Hamilton Club (27), London Marquee (March 1), Birmingham Barbarella's (2), Retford Porterhouse (3), Leeds Polytechnic (8) and Uxbridge Brunel University (9), with many more gigs still being finalised. The band have acquired a new member in ex-Pat Travers drummer Clive Edwards, who replaces Dixie Lee in the line-up.

Renaissance

ANNIE HASLAM of Renaissance

RENAISSANCE, who now seem to have slipped into a policy of playing regular mini-tours rather than occasional full-scale itineraries, have lined up another string of five major concerts for the early spring. They are at Glasgow Apollo (April 7), Edinburgh Odeon (8), Birmingham Odeon (10), Manchester Apollo (11) and London Hammersmith Odeon (12). Promoter is Harvey Goldsmith, and there's apparently a possibility of one or two more dates being added.

● STADIUM DOGS begin their own series of headlining dates after they finish their current tour, supporting The Kinks. First confirmed are at London Camden Music Machine (February 7), Salford University (10) and Norwich Boogie House (11).

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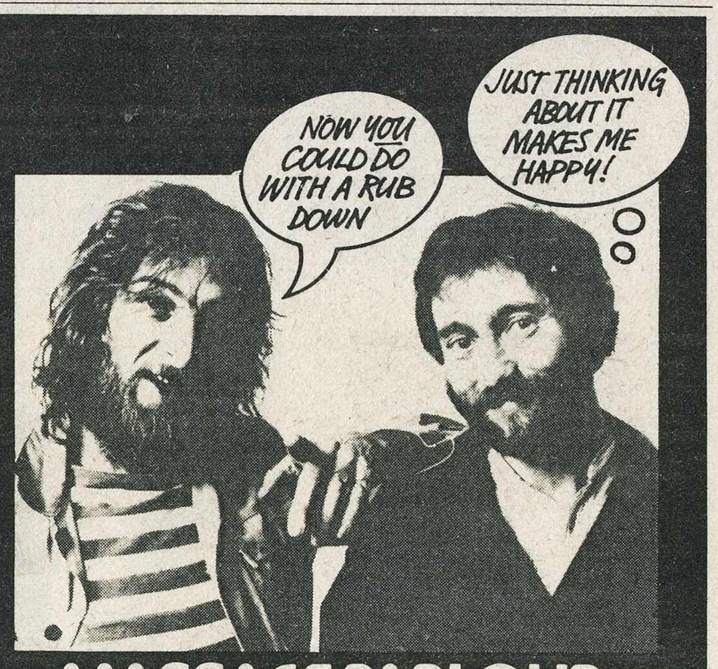

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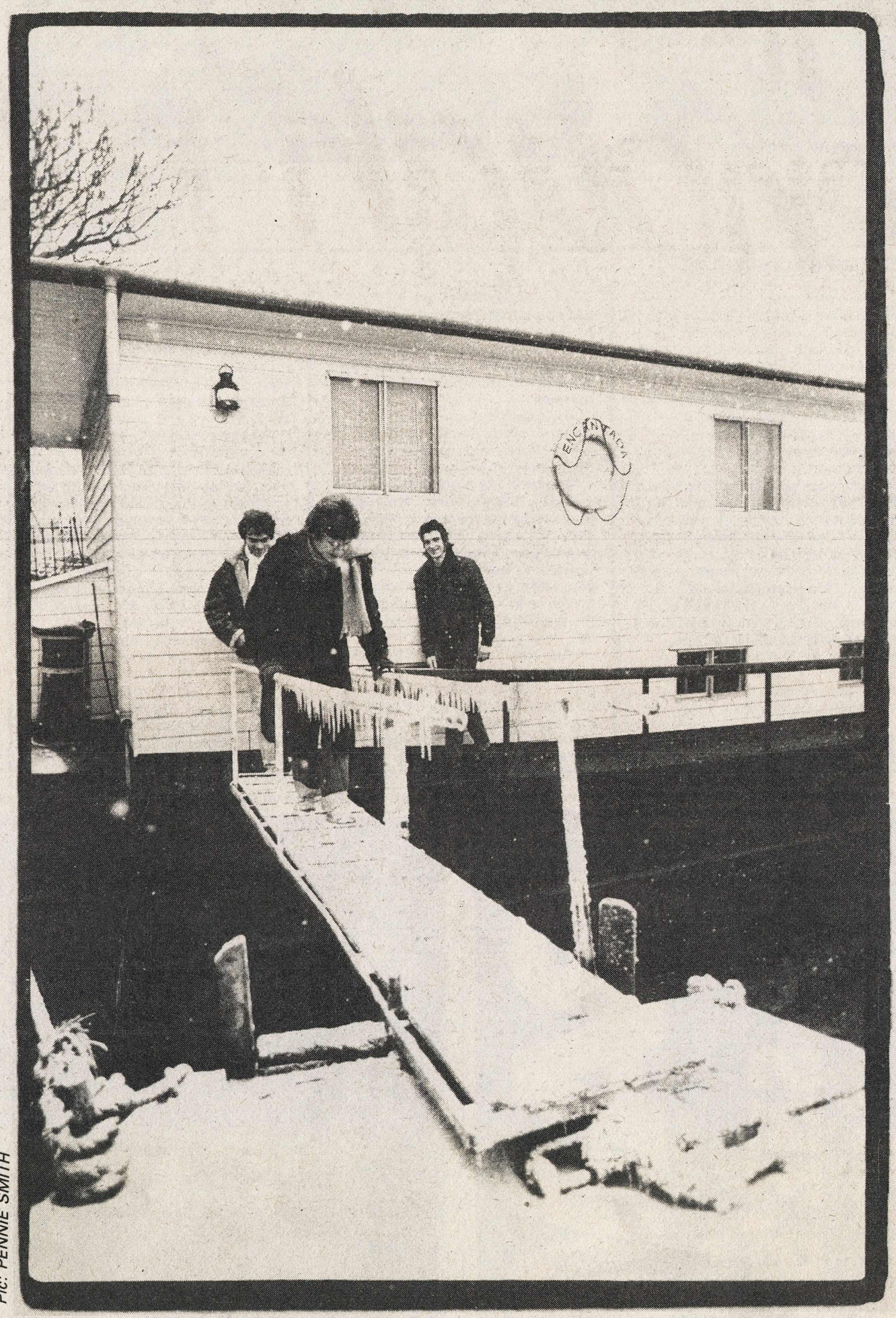

Pic: PENNIE SMITH

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY have a mission. They're "an ark sailing in a sea of shit" — which is, like, some tricky feat of navigation. ANDY GILL meets the crew, learns how they coast round the crap.

"TWILIGHT OVER Tyrannopolis, and leaving London, parallel lines of red lights left flank the sodium yellow of the central reservation. The M1 (northbound carriageway) is choked and stationary. Had the plague returned to London, the rats could hardly have shown a greater desire to quit the ship.

Present day London exhibits all the qualities of the Tyrannopolis, a settlement growth-stage midway between Megalopolis (the large Metropolis) and Nekropolis (the city of the dead).

An old geography text-book of mine cites the following as attributes of the tyrannopolis: "Display and expense become the measurements of culture; moral apathy replaces good living; commerce alternates between expansion and depression."

As if that's not bad enough, nekropolitic qualities include "the decline of municipal services" and "the decay of cultural institutions", two qualities painfully apparent in a society where housewives fight over food in supermarkets, a man gets shot for a loaf of bread (really!) and the Tate Gallery buys a pile of bricks for an absurd sum of money.

For all its surface "cultural" extravagance, London is as sterile as an Indian clutching Mrs. Gandhi's free transistor radio.

The Punishment of Luxury is the entropy to which it leads. Punishment of Luxury are four sane human beings from Newcastle who released a single "Puppet Life" (one of 1978's best) on the Small Wonder indie and gained a reputation of sorts for their (supposedly) "theatrical" stage performance.

Founder / guitarist Nevilluxury explains the band's genesis with succinct candour:

"What really happened was Mal (a former member) and myself wanted to get a band together. We wrote 'P. Life' and I introduced Brian (vocalist) to the band, who I'd worked with before. Not to use him as a front man, but more of a *catalyst,* y'know? It was an *idea,* like, that was a bit daft, but we were all into it. So we asked Brian — 'Here's the song, here's the words, here's the music, here's the tune, right, we're playing it down the pub' — it was like that, and it just *happened.* Of course the personnel changed, 'cause we like to maintain a very high standard ..."

After numerous "personnel changes" the band settled into the present line-up of Nev on guitar and vocals, Brian Bond on lead vocals, Jimmy Giro on bass and vocals and Micky Centura on drums.

They're down in London to play one of the first dates of their current tour (at the Nashville) and to sort out some business with their new record company, United Artists. They can hardly wait to get it over with and get out of town.

The gig is my first taste of both the live band and the venue, and hopefully my last of the latter. (I confess I find it quite astonishing that the Nashville has acquired such a prestigious reputation).

Punilux open with "Puppet Life", Bond sidling onstage like a clockwork doll, round and round, arriving at the microphone at exactly the right moment and puppet-dancing in time to the step-rhythms of the song. It's mightily effective, and goes down well. Nev later explains what the song's about:

"People, everybody, through television and the papers are being moulded to believe a load of rubbish. There's a mass amount of lying going on. The robots of the world are being moulded into acceptance. 'Puppet life' is about a person who's being moulded, but realises it's society that does it.

"That's why the last verse says: *'Our bodies can take no more/The fascist will always end up on the floor'.* It's optimistic, 'cause even though society's doing this — well, the capitalist system is just a fact, and it wants to maintain its money, so it has to keep people at a level where it can control them — these people who've been controlled are starting to realise it. I'm being optimistic as opposed to just saying 'Oh my God it's a fascist state.' It *isn't* a fascist state."

You mean the way people's responses are saturated by trivia, like Princess Anne's baby being more important than several thousand deaths . . . ?

"Yes, they put all this trivia in because they want to keep people's minds away from what's *really* happening. It's very well worked out. They're very crafty people. There's always the veil over the eyes — the tits, or whatever people want."

It's no accident that they follow "Puppet Life" with "The Demon": its lyrics, *"I'm the King of Chaos, the God of Chance — I'll teach you the discord dance"* refer directly to the moment of change experienced in "Puppet Life".

Nev again:

"The demon of change inspires a spark in anybody; they change, turn around and *think.* Like, you're doing something ordinary, it'll get in there and just go 'click' and change you. It needn't necessarily be *evil.* It's just opposed to the lethargic way of things."

What's likely to become the band's most controversial song follows next. Entitled "Poof", it features Bond as archetypal obstreporous thickie, beer-swilling lout ranting on about his machismo and aversion to homosexuals. Again, there's an optimistic sting to it when Giro and Nev, representing the "poofs", chorus *"We're not the sort of people that you'll ever push around / We'll never ever be driven underground / You're very much mistaken if you think we'll turn the other cheek".*

The next night, in Birmingham, "Poof" is to be the cause of some consternation amongst a group of disco-boys who obviously identify too strongly with its protagonist, but here at the Nashville, folk seem to take it as it's meant, and things progress more or less smoothly through "Baby Don't Jump", "British Baboon" and "Brainbomb" to "Jellyfish", and it's only during the encore, "Engine Of Excess", that things start to get out of hand.

A few over-exuberant pogoers cause some fuss when asked (non-violently, mind) to vacate the stage, and pull Punilux's tour manager off the stage to deal with him jungle-fashion.

As Newton explained, every action has an equal and opposite reaction, here manifested in concentric rings of brawlers converging on the centre of action and eventually hitting out at everything in reach.

Some bands might ignore it and make with the "Show must go on" cop-out, but Punilux, to their credit, stop dead mid-song and successfully prevent a full-scale cowboy scene.

Most reports and reviews of Punilux that I've read have stressed the "theatrical" side of their performance, so much so that the — in actuality — *low-key* nature of the visual side's assimilation into the performance as a whole comes as a great surprise. Punishment of Luxury are no more "theatrical", really, than Devo. Indeed, several of their stage movements are identical. (But more of that comparison later . . .).

"Basically," Nev explains, "it's just music, but you've got a face and a body which you can move and express things with. If it's too contrived, too well-rehearsed, too overdone, then you lose the whole feel, right? There's got to be room for improvisation."

After the gig, it's back to the group's lodgings, an ultra-Habitat houseboat moored off Cheyne Walk in Chelsea, which, ironically enough, works out cheaper, at £35 a night, than putting band and crew up at some dingy one-star.

I learn, with interest, that this Terence Conran dream of polished pine and durries is the same one used recently by Richard Hell: as good a mooring as any, I suppose, to harbour a death-wish . . .

THE NEXT DAY, after a ludicrously early photo-session with Pennie Smith, the band troop over to the United Artists offices to have their photo taken with UA bigwigs for *Music Week,* the trade paper which uses phrases like "market penetration capability" without the slightest hint of humour and whose T-Zers concern inter-company executive transfers and the like.

In a way, it's something of a surprise that Punishment of Luxury managed to get a record deal of any kind. True, they've been offered several, but so few were their illusions about "the biz" that they saw through all the small-print and the attitudes with ease. Those dollar-signs that click into position in the fruit-machine eyes of young bands at the merest wave of contract are conspicuously absent in Punilux's eyes. No bullshit, please, we're Geordies.

"Virgin offered us a deal," says Nev. "I think it was, like, the Jokers' Deal. I only read the first few lines,

■ *Continues over page*

■ *From previous page*

and it was silly. It was a singles deal, which would have meant doing this 'option' thing for years and years and years, and I wasn't into having my life tied down at the time, to anything.

"And Charisma were very interested in a production deal. At that time we were with Quarry Productions and there were one or two disagreements on how Quarry were run, and Quarry and Charisma were together. It was like 'Here's my friend, he does so-and-so . . .'

The Old Boys Network?

"... Yeah, that was what we felt. I just phoned up the guy and said, 'I'll see ya'. Radar were interested, too, and so were Automatic. But we never got to hear about that. We were never informed. Somewhere along the pipeline it was stopped, for some reason. There's these weird politics about, y'know — only so much information gets through. We found we were kept very much in the dark at that time, so we decided, y'know, 'to hell with it'.

"And UA were the only people who came up to the gigs and seemed sincerely interested. They showed an interest of a different nature, a *moulding* nature — 'we can make you into this'.

"It was like a cockfight. First, there were groomed hens, clucking, and then all of a sudden they started snarling at us! We just threw it all out into the open and said, 'There, fight it out amongst yourselves'. The person who keeps it up the longest, who's most interested, will be the best."

Hence their signing to UA. Again though, there's no illusions about what they get for their signatures:

"The money just about financially sustains us, there's just enough for equipment, and if we work our arses off we'll break even. (Laughs). We'll make a quarter of a million pounds before we get any royalties, we're aware of that . . . But there are points in the deal, freedom of music — we'll fight to the death about the music that goes out.

"For instance we do some songs that are weak at the time, and they like them. I don't think it would be in their interest, or ours, to release them. They said 'that's more of a feeling of goodwill'. I said 'We've been through too many situations to rely on goodwill', so we got it down in the contract . . ."

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY. *Pic: PENNIE SMITH*

Punilux's dealings with the music biz, and their hatred of London in general, eventually manifested itself in a song, "Baby Don't Jump":

"It's about contracts," explains Nev, *"Streets of gold in London, dotted with Bastards'*. Jimmy's observation 'London, dotted with Bastards' started us off . . . *'corrugated contract minds'*. Like in ancient Rome, you have the excess, the orgies, the rape-people feeding, sticking their fingers down their throats to puke it up, and eating more. The dying decaying sort of city — London is horrible, man. It's spreading, too, a "gangrenous disease."

LATER THAT day we leave tyrannopolis for Barbarellas in Birmingham, and some unpleasantly violent scenes (I'm not going to flatter anyone's ego by describing them) which left the band soaked with beer and driblets of phlegm, and sustaining cuts and bruises from carefully-aimed glasses.

The band, though understandably angry, are remarkably philosophical about the reaction:

"It seems like a *hungry* violence," Nev muses. "They seem to get a charge of energy, as if society's got no outlet, and it's just building up. They come to the most *powerful* situations, like music, stand next to the speakers and just go *berserk*. And when they get on the platform, it's a chance to say 'ME', you know? We can understand it, but there's no way we can always handle it, 'cause people get hurt. You've got to understand it otherwise it gets you into a two-way hate, y'know?"

Nev's use of the word 'platform' for 'stage' in the last paragraph is particularly illuminating. Earlier I compared their stage act to Devo, and the comparison doesn't end there. Like Devo — who they have never seen, by the way — Punishment of Luxury seem to have a view of society as a parabola the peak of which has been attained and passed.

However, unlike Devo, Punilux have a well developed sense of moral responsibility. Rather than just make entertaining soundtracks for the decline of civilisation they try to include a didactic element. More than a mirror, Punilux are a picture: The Portrait of Dorian Gray, to be exact; a gut reaction to the current state of humanity and the incompatibility of its excesses at both ends of the scale.

Hence their act is in miniature scenarios — not laboured theatricals *but nudges and inferences to the songs' intentions,* with set archetype characters like the British Baboon ("The slob, the swine, the heavy, the typical male. Britain, the flag, nationalism — that sort of shit, back to the most primitive form of uselessness"; "the beast of prey dressed as a human being") and the Jellyfish ("Jellyfish people are lost in a big sea of boredom, nothingness; it isn't so much the sting, as having no spine. It can be a beautiful, darting creature, but it doesn't realise its own power, so it wobbles — we've all got it inside of us, as well").

A Devo performance with the ideology of the Belt And Braces theatre group; caring, rather than cynical. A *platform* rather than a *stage*.

"You can be cynical," says Nev, "but if you're living like part of it, like the poor here in Birmingham, you cannot just turn off and say 'I'm just playing music'. If there's anything we see that's going wrong, we want to *say* it.

"In the old times, theatre used to be the platform of news, and people used to go and watch the theatre because it was what was *happening*. It was *real*, y'know? And lots was learnt from that. I'd like to intensify the lyrics — not *propagating* as much as *inspiring* change. You've got to turn the words into weapons."

So you'd like to open people's eyes but not point them in any direction?

"Well, it'd be good to point them in some directions. I'd put it this way: as regards Fascism I'd definitely point — to be quite clear about it — and make a stand against completely negative forces. The world's got to the stage where you've got to do something about it, y'know?"

DESPITE THE fact that they'll doubtless be labelled 'Rock Theatre', 'art rock' or suchlike, one of Punilux's greatest assets is their commitment and lack of pretension. They realise that there's more to life than fashion — fashion is just the clothes a mind puts on to hide its essential vacuity.

As I leave to catch a couple of hours' kip before the journey back to Sheffield, Nevilluxury outlines the band's future biog.

"It's going to end up as an Ark," he explains.

"Punishment of Luxury is an Ark in a sea of shit!"

RAMONES
NEW SINGLE
SHE'S THE ONE
b/w I WANNA BE SEDATED
SIR 4009
from the album, Road to Ruin,
SIR 6063
SIRE

"Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes"
Tennyson

"His music has a joyful, very attractive surface.
But there is a substance beneath."
New Yorker

"A 'simple' and fascinating hour of music."
NME

"Mr. Reich has more in common with, say,
Kraftwerk . . . than I'm sure he'd care to suggest . . .
it's languidly energetic music, very heady, just the
job for a long Sunday afternoon."
Record Mirror

Steve Reich Music for 18 Musicians

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No Mean City

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On the album: "No Mean City".
On the single: "May The Sunshine".
On the tour:-

JANUARY		FEBRUARY	
25th	HANLEY, Victoria Rooms	1st	SOUTHAMPTON, Gaumont
26th	NEWCASTLE, Mayfair	3rd	WOLVERHAMPTON, Civic
27th	LEEDS, University	4th	BIRMINGHAM, Odeon
28th	LIVERPOOL, Empire	5th	HAMMERSMITH, Odeon
29th	BRISTOL, Colston Hall	6th	TO BE ANNOUNCED
30th	LEICESTER, De Montfort Hall		
31st	BRIGHTON, Dome		

MOUNTAIN

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WILL THE REAL MARC BOLAN PLEASE STAND UP

...And Marc's brother?

. . . And who the fnurg is Steve Ashley?

See bottom of page, fact fans. . .

THRILLS

UNLESS JOCK McDONALD and James Houldsworth have their way a whole new set of nails will be driven into the coffin of punk on April Fool's Day — when Beaufort Market closes down.

The Market, in the Arts and Craft Studio building on the Kings Road, within gobbing distance of Malcolm McLaren's Seditionaries shop, consists of a number of stalls selling reasonably priced modern clothes.

Poly Styrene herself ran one for 12 months after the market opened 2½ years ago.

The building's owners, Amalgamated Stores, have now sold their lease, and the new lease-holders — believed by some to be McDonald's Hamburgers, though there is doubt about this — have served all stall-holders with notices to quit by April.

The rents, varying between £25 and £40 per week, are exceptionally cheap rate for the area, which may have something to do with the decision.

Certainly Chelsea Police would not discourage the closure: following a gig played on the roof of the market last year they seem to have been present in considerable force every Saturday afternoon.

Some habitues of this Saturday punk scene even scurrilously suggest that whenever Chelsea have an away match the local constabulary make up their arrest quota down there.

Jock McDonald (no relation to hamburgers), who runs an exceptionally well-stocked New Wave record store in the market and who promoted the Rainbow Public Image gigs, and James Houldsworth, proprietor of Smutz clothing on the first floor, are attempting to hold back the Inevitable March Of Progress (sic).

They point out, quite correctly, the significance of the market to contemporary culture. In the same way that Kensington Market (still running) reflected the moods and fashions of the late '60s, so Beaufort Market reflects those of today.

Beaufort Market — pic courtesy of TV PERSONALITIES, cos they're in it, extreme left.

COPPING THE BEST BUYS IN LONDON

Not only is the market important to retail purchasers of clothes — it is listed as one of London's attractions in various tourist guides — but it is also significant to the fashion trade in general, providing a focus point for wholesaling New Wave clothes to outlets away from Central London.

Houldsworth also points out that the majority of stall-holders actually make their wares themselves. "If the market closes," he says, "it's the end of something that's projected an important image of youth culture. It seems a shame that it will be replaced with something really boring."

Though most stall-holders appear to agree that the closure is a minor tragedy (as did PiL guitarist Keith Levine who looked in while I checked it out last Saturday) there is dissent among some of the more established traders.

The proprietor of Robot — who didn't wish to give his name — said he felt the site had degenerated greatly from what it once was.

"We've been here about 2½ years," he said, "and are ready to move out. But if I had just a small stall I'd be very upset."

He did concede, however, that "without a doubt it's been the most important market in London for some years . . . but we'll find somewhere else. In a way, the market's overrun itself."

However, McDonald and Houldsworth have not given up yet, and a petition is being organized.

Who knows? It may even do some good. It certainly would be depressing if the most colourful scene the Kings Road has known for some ten years were to disappear.

Houldsworth comments: "The police come down here because something *might* happen. But now I guarantee something definitely *will* happen."

He promises that the day prior to April 1 will witness an enormous, continuous party, with at least eight bands playing at the Market.

"I predict," he pronounces apocalyptically," a massive, devastating rebellion."

CHRIS SALEWICZ

THRILLS

DEATH AT THE MUSIC MACHINE

VIOLENCE ONCE AGAIN raised its ugly head in London last weekend when a 20-year-old man was stabbed to death at a Troggs gig at Camden Town's Music Machine.

Peter Kennedy, of Royal College Street, NW1, died as he was rushed to hospital with wounds in his chest.

The stabbing apparently occurred after a scuffle broke out between two men in the early hours of Saturday morning. A doorman was alerted and seconds later caught a man as he attempted to run out of the club.

According to Music Machine manager Mike Parker, the man was in his mid-30s. He is still assisting police with their enquiries.

Anyone who was at the Music Machine between midnight and 2 am on Saturday, and can help police with their enquiries, should contact Albany Street Police Station (telephone 01 725 4212).

Referring to a report in the London *Evening News* describing the Music Machine as "a punk club", Parker said: "This is not a punk club and The Troggs are hardly a punk band. You can't believe anything you read in the Fleet Street papers."

STEVE CLARKE

MEANWHILE, things are hotting up in the West End of London . . .

Or, to be exact, the mile square that is Soho — where the sound of reggae rhythms can now be heard emanating from two new specialist shops, both crammed full of mango-ripe pre-release sounds as well as a superb selection of back-catalogue material.

First, the original dealer of deadly dread sounds, Daddy Kool himself, is firmly ensconced in new premises at 94 Dean Street — a far larger and even funkier version of the original Hanway Street shop.

And just before Christmas Maroon's Tunes, the first all-specialist shop started by the Honest John chain, opened its doors at 19 Greek Street.

In addition to some almost startling price cutting — import Studio One LPs like the classic "Heptones On Top" or Burning Spear's "Rocking Time" are on sale at £2.99 — Maroon's Tunes have set up several deals securing exclusive distribution rights to certain US-pressed sounds. Because of the J.A. vinyl shortage and currency situation many master tapes are now being taken out of the country to be pressed.

In keeping with the trend towards record dealers crossing over to becoming labels, Daddy Kool itself has recently issued certain sides that would not otherwise have been released — Dennis Brown's "Tribulation", for example.

Maroon's Tunes, however, are going one step further by building a recording studio into the first floor of their premises. They plan to hire out time to musicians and also cut sides for their own label.

At a time when the decline in quality control has led to something of a devaluation of backgarden rock labels, the majors should perhaps look up and rememmber that the continuing rise of the British independent label is not *just* restricted to white rock acts.

CHRIS SALEWICZ

THRILLS

Above: STEVE ASHLEY then, as folkie. Top of page, left: Steve Ashley now. Top right: Geoff??

THE TRUTH ABOUT BOLAN'S 'BROTHER'

"DEAR NEIL," the letter from Chrysalis Records ran, "I enclose a photo and a small amount of copy on Steve Ashley, who is our new signing, for which we predict big things this year.

"The main interest with Steve is that he is Marc Bolan's younger brother. His debut album 'Curiouser And Curiouser' is set for release in March, and a single taken from it 'Lover's In The Night' and 'Meadows Of Love', will be released late February.

"When 'Blondie' tour in the Spring, Steve will be the support act; I would appreciate the photo and a few lines in *NME* next week, in return for this I will arrange a Debbie Harry interview in late February.

"Best wishes, Geoff."

Huh? Marc Bolan's brother? In return for this I will arrange a Debbie Harry interview! Who is this creep? Turned out no one around the office even knew this guy Geoff.

Fuming at his lack of both taste and scruples, the Ed. grabbed the phone to bawl this Geoff out . . . only to discover that Chrysalis had never heard of him either.

Or Steve Ashley.

Evidently, this was a case for the *Thrills* hoax squad.

To cut a long story short, *Thrills* eventually tracked Mr Ashley down to an address in Colchester, where we paid him a surprise visit.

And we can now reveal that far from being Bolan's brother, our hoaxer is actually second-hand record seller Steve Greenfield, who sings and plays guitar in Essex semi-pro band The Perishers (or so he says).

He doesn't have a record contract and he has never had any connection with Bolan — except that he likes to tell friends he once met the great man, and the walls of his home, in Ipswich Road, Colchester, are decorated with framed portraits.

The hoax was carried out by Greenfield's manager, Jeff Spencer, who helps run the used record store in Colchester.

After our *Thrills* investigator had exposed the hoax, Spencer said: "I got the Chrysalis paper from a friend. It was a hype from start to finish, but we hoped to generate some interest before it was traced back to us."

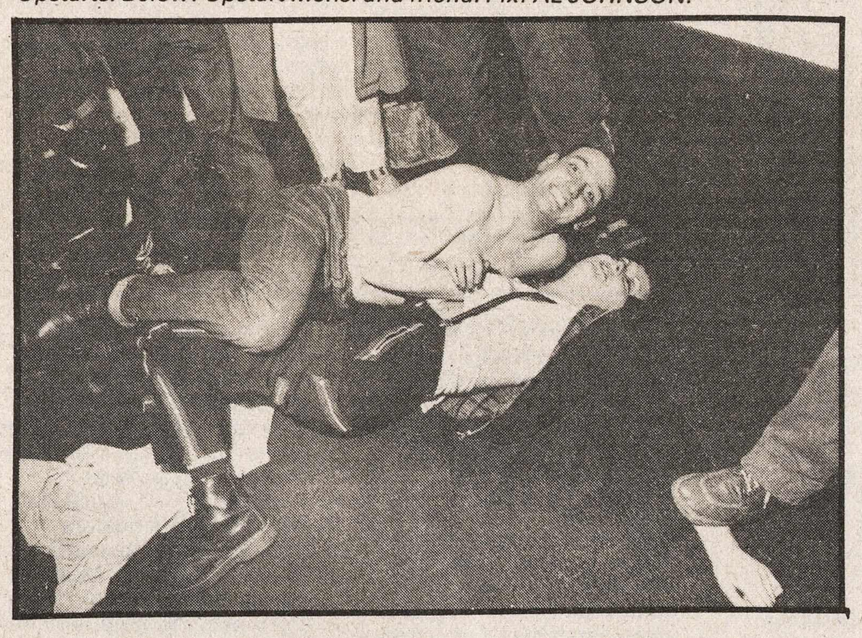
The playful pair are touting a demo tape round the record companies — and they believe an aura of mystery, however flimsy, might help.

Greenfield has used the name Steve Ashley before, during an ill-fated attempt to make it on the folk club circuit. As he says, "Marc Bolan started out as a folk singer . . ."

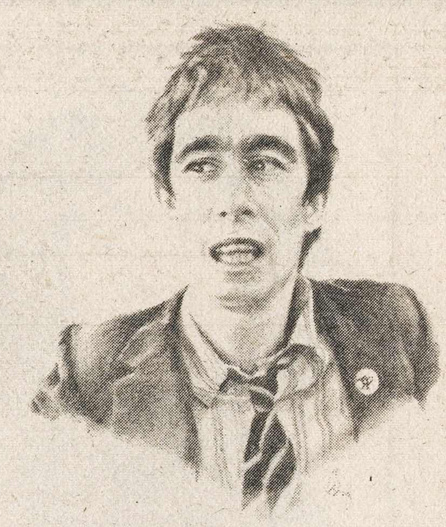
MARTIN McNEILL

THRILLS

Above: a package of eight — on shelf, The Invaders; on settee, The Angelic Upstarts. Below: Upstart Mensi and friend. Pix: AL JOHNSON.



PURSEY'S PACKAGE TAKES POLYDOR TO THE BANK



IT'S NO BIG deal that Jimmy Pursey has quietly realised a buried ideal from the original punk manifesto and conceived his own label, committed to aiding new young groups.

As Mond, lead guitarist for The Angelic Upstarts, explained, "He's not the sort of guy who would forget or ignore just because he's a fuckin' success." So Pursey commences 1979 churning waste funds from his gormless pop star parading into something practical and positive, constructively using money you feed him to give something back. His music may be silly, his mouthings puerile, his ideas misjudged, but it's impossible to fault his basic motivation.

Pursey controls the label J.P. Productions with Sham manager Tony Gordon. The enterprise is totally separate from Sham 69, but Polydor, perhaps misguidedly trusting Pursey, have bought and nourished the idea — although Pursey could have sold it anywhere — and treat the signings as if they were their own. Pursey chooses and produces — the latter isn't a prerequisite of signing — the bands, Gordon organises them and Polydor package, distribute, promote etc.

Pursey isn't merely a glorified A&R man — it's his money, his gamble. J.P. Productions is essentially a Polydor satellite — something like Epic with CBS.

Pursey's first signings, with more due, aren't stunning, but The Angelic Upstarts and The Invaders are both at a particularly passionate and desperate stage of development, and a major label would easily miss out on such a crucial stage by making a slow decision, so there's the possible spontaneity and indignation of an independent record with the promotion of a major label. And with Pursey directly involved, the chances of the signings becoming jaded and pressurised are less.

The closest musically to Sham 69 are The Angelic Upstarts, a Geordie quartet whose sound is as fierce and edgy as Step Forward Sham. J.P. will capture their animosity and bitterness, which could quite easily have been smoothed out if a major became involved. Just one explosive tantrum from the Upstarts on J.P. and the label will have justified itself.

Pursey himself says: "Actually, they're the major reason I started the label. I really found them interesting, and they've got so much energy! I just had to give them a chance."

The group consists of Mensi (bellowing vocals), Mond (guitar), Sticks (drums) and Steve (bass). They've released 500 copies of "Murder Of Liddle Towers" through Small Wonder. The best effect of J.P. for them was that it gives them a chance to actually play. The Pursey's Package tour is the first time they've seriously ventured outside of Newcastle, and within their local area they're banned from all but one club.

"We were over the moon to get the deal," gushes Mond, " 'cos we've got to get out, move out of Newcastle to play, and this was the only outlet. We're not really bothered about the deal, about records — we just want to play. The thing abut Pursey and Gordon, they've got the contacts for the gigs. Pursey I trust. I wouldn't go to bed with him, but I trust him."

Mensi reasons: "I slag Pursey, but I slag me mother and I fuckin' love her!"

The Upstarts' first single is out in mid-February — "I'm An Upstart" (captured right, a classic).

The Invaders are led by earnest ex-computer worker Ukranian Slavko Sidelnyk (Sid), whose bitter, bemused songs deal with technology, ecology, psychology etc. in determined terms. Apart from Sid on guitar and voice, there's Geoff Haran (guitar), Howard Wilson (drums) and Martyn Taylor (bass and backing vocals).

Pursey: "They're not very naturally exciting. They're not too good on stage, but they're musically very strong. They'll make good records that'll sell, and that will enable us to keep the Upstarts, who won't sell many records. I've just finished mixing them, and I've tried to give them a very Byrds sound, with their own sound."

Sid is blunt about his involvement too.

"J.P. was the only choice for the group. It's very difficult for us. Pursey in the studios has got ideas, he's got drive, but having the Pursey label attached is hard. Like we're nothing like Sham or the Upstarts. And the Pursey package tour is just a little bit of a headache. It's a real mismatch. But there's no alternative — what can we do? Give up? What does that achieve? As a deal it's very precarious, but it gives us a chance and we're going to work hard.

"Pursey's great. He's a likeable rogue, and he really drives you. He works straightforward and he tries to look after the bands he's got. It's a better deal in that way to a major.

The Invaders' single will be either "I'm A Girl In Action" or "Always With You". Produced by Pursey it may have a bite instead of blandness that'll make it more 'listenable'.

J.P. Productions is an encouraging endeavour. Pursey tries more, as his enemies give him fewer chances.

"I want people to give J.P. Productions a chance like they're not giving Sham a chance. What I'm trying to do is keep alive groups who would just die. To see them die would be such a shame, and would be for no reason. Like The U.K. Subs — I've just signed them. If they died, it would be really terrible.

"People are saying punk is dead, but they're the ones killing it off by ignoring everything."

And what about Sham?

"We'll show everybody" says Jimmy.

PAUL MORLEY

THRILLS

LOWRY

PROOF OF CIA's UFO 'COVER-UP'

UFO experts have been claiming for years that there has been a cover-up on the subject of official sightings of unidentified flying objects.

To date their arguments have been lacking in hard evidence — but now an Arizona-based UFO group has obtained 1,000 pages of documents under the Freedom of Information Act which they claim prove that "the government has been lying to us all these years."

According to Ground Saucer Watch, a research organisation of some 500 scientists and others, the documents show that the CIA has been secretly monitoring UFO sightings since 1949. US embassies are used to help gather information on UFOs, which is then directed to the CIA, the White House and the National Security Agency.

One CIA memo dated August 1, 1952 recommends surveillance of UFOs but states: "It is strongly urged, however, that no indication of CIA interest or concern reach the press or public, in view of their probably alarmist tendencies to accept such interest as 'confirmatory' of the soundness of 'unpublished facts' in the hands of the US government."

Another report details a 1976 incident when two F-4 Phantom jet fighters pursued a large UFO that appeared to launch smaller craft. One of these "headed straight toward the F-4 at a very fast rate of speed." The report claims: "The pilot attempted to fire an AIM-9 missile at the object but at that instant his weapon control panel went off and he lost all communications." The pilot managed to evade the craft and then watched as it "returned to the primary object for a perfect rejoin."

Another CIA document of October 2, 1952 expresses concern that UFO sightings could mask Soviet air attacks or psychological warfare. The report, which went direct to the CIA head at the time, advises that the National Security Agency be alerted, that the matter be discussed with the Psychological Strategy Board and that the CIA help develop "a policy of public information which will minimise concern and possible panic resulting from the numerous sightings of unidentified objects."

Yet another report from November 1975 directs: "Unless there is evidence which links sightings, or unless media queries link sightings, queries can best be handled individually at the source and as questions arise."

William Spaulding, the aerospace engineer who heads Ground Saucer Watch, claims the documents show that there are definite patterns and links in the sightings.

"We find a concentration of sightings around our military installations, research and development areas. The UFO phenomenon is following what our own astronauts are doing on other planets — we send a scoutship, we take soil samples and then we land."

Spaulding also claims to have sworn evidence from two retired Air Force colonels that at least two UFOs have crash-landed and been recovered by the Air Force. One was in Mexico in 1948, the other near Kingman, Arizona in 1953. The officers claim that they glimpsed dead aliens who, in both cases, were four feet tall with silverish complexions, wearing silver outfits that "seemed fused to the body from the heat".

All of which could be a curtain raiser to the real McCoy. Spaulding is currently waiting for a judge's ruling as to whether he can get from the CIA 57 items, including motion picture film, gun camera film and residue from landings that would provide hard evidence of "retrievals of the third kind."

Among these are 40 to 48 frames of a film shot in 1952 by a Cleveland TV cameraman, now a Ground Saucer Watch member, which the Air Force borrowed in 1957 and never returned. The official explanation of the object he filmed was that it was a meteor.

Perhaps Steven Spielberg, interviewed by this writer for *NME* last year had it right after all.

DICK TRACY

THRILLS

QUEEN

THEIR NEW SINGLE

DONT STOP ME NOW

C/W

IN ONLY SEVEN DAYS

Limited edition available in full colour picture sleeve

A pack of Pointers (L-R): Ruth, Anita, June. Pic: PENNIE.

POINTERS TO THE FUTURE?

NOSTALGIA, so the old song hath it, ain't what it used ta be.

Once upon a four-part harmony Anita, Ruth, June and Bonnie Pointer had themselves a good thing going turning nostalgia into fashion. Not the camp-as-a-row-of-tents nostalgia perfected by buxom boys in the band favourite Bette Midler, not the twee razamataz foisted on a gullible television audience by the loathsome Manhattan Transfer. Nope, The Pointer Sisters took their look from San Francisco's Oxfam thrift thread emporiums but transcended '30s chic by virtue of a genuine ability to handle classy modern soul and breezy high rent jazz without dipping into the bottomless bag of junk parody that befell the Pointers' many imitators circa 1975.

These days the Pointers don't push their old-time stance. They became trapped by an image and a repertoire, the public learnt to take them for granted and forgot the original appeal. The Blue Thumb contract expired and the girls went into hiding. Bonnie took up a solo lease with Motown, the others went off to have babies, get married and "straighten out our heads".

This year sees a rejuvenated gang with a star producer (Richard Perry), a new label (Perry's Planet Records) and an optimistically titled disc in "Energy", where they handle material from Steely Dan, Bruce Springclean, Stephen Stills, Russ Ballard and, naturally, Allen Toussaint. A single, "Everybody Is A Star" from the Sly Stone songbook, was given an uncharitable review in a fit of pique by myself, though in retrospect it sounds fine on the radio and deserves to be a hit.

Last week the Pointers were in town on a promotional visit, giggling a lot and stepping into Ronnie Scotts for the benefit of a gadarene swine herd of important people. This was only their second gig in two years, so we thought you'd like to know that the girls sang up a storm, looked incredibly gorgeous in spanking nouveau urban cling film, cocked a snook at critical detractors and impressed the pie-eyed hordes sufficiently to ensure another outbreak of Pointermania.

Afterwards Ruth, Anita and June could be found slumming it in the Inn On The Park, gawking at the snow and mumbling sweet nothings to a stream of goggling reporters, lechers and hippy P.R. honeys.

"Yes," they chirruped in unison, "we are thrilled with the new record, and the chance to meet Richard Perry." And "Yes, we were knocked out working with Toto and Waddy Wachtel, singing all those fantastic songs by artists we admire."

In 1979 the Pointers live in El Lay, not Oakland: "It's alright if you have the right bank-book. The industry is still a man's world but we can cope."

If they've ever been exploited, they claim it only did them good and they're only too grateful that the people want to see and hear them after three years in the wilderness. So what have you been doing?

Anita says: "We've been busy being human, ain't that the truth girls?"

Ruth and June add that it's hard staying on the wire. "In this business you can get driven too far. When they love you everything is Beautiful. When they start to hurt you sensitive folks can go off the edge. Look at Donny Hathaway, a quiet cat who got broken."

But the Pointers are survivors, lovers and fighters. They don't need to open their mouths except to sing. That's a plenty. What a bloody great bunch of lads.

MAX BELL

THRILLS

Donny & Marie; no wedding plans yet

YOU PROBABLY know by now that Marie Osmond was offered the lead female role in *Grease* — before Olivier Newton-Polecat, that is — and that she turned it down flat.

But why, fair Marie?

She doesn't want to go into too much detail, but . . . "There were things about the script that conflicted with my beliefs."

The Osmonds, all 157 of them, are in town. This is a press conference to herald their forthcoming concert In The Gracious Presence of Yvonne.

However, the greasy hacks present are not ready to let this one drop.

"Tell me, Marie," says a bleached scribette, "if you were offered the part of Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, which after all has a bed scene, would you turn *that* down?"

"Yes," says Marie. "Well, maybe. I'd have to see the script."

The *script?* The hacks snigger. On either flank of the assembly, the three-piece-suited Mormon crushers surge and shift restlessly.

But it would be ungracious of your reporter to imply that Les Osmonds were anything other than professional, friendly and poised in the face of Grub Street's finest.

No, Marie's not having a scene with Andy Gibb (which shows her good judgment). No, Donny's wife isn't pregnant. Well, yes she is actually but Donald doesn't want to go into detail at this point in time. It's personal. A tactical error on the part of a hackette gives Alan and Merrill a chance to weigh in with all those details that nobody wants to hear — the New Album and so forth. No, Little Jimmy isn't recording right now — his voice is breaking.

So what are The Osmonds doing at this moment, work-wise (the jargon is catching)?

"Working on Little Jimmy's album," says Merrill, bafflingly.

It's all good clean fun; the coffee is free but the hacks have to pay for their alcohol. The crushers yawn, Little Jimmy simpers, Donny, Marie and Alan parry and throughout it all Olive Osmond regards the multitude with an expression of what can only be described as benign malice.

Business as usual, in other words

TY COON

THRILLS

RUNAWAYS HITCH ONTO ROCK MOVIEWAGON

THE RUNAWAYS are set to join the growing ranks of rock stars turned celluloid heroes.

A film under the working title of *We're All Crazy Now* should be ready for May release in America. Directed by low budget veteran Jim Roberson, it is a rock comedy scripted by television writer Barney Gerard. It centres around the exploits of, wait for it, an all-girl band on the up and up from their hometown backwater in Texas, heading for the traditional nirvana of American youth — HOLLYWOOD.

Seems like the girls are on the run from a crooked manager who has sold their contract to an Arabian mogul (where have I heard all this before?) who, naturally enough, wants to transport Ms Jett and Co. back to his Middle Eastern nest where they can enrich the local culture and feather his harem.

In what *Thrills* is assured are many mirth-inducing vignettes, the band hook up with another guardian who assists their escape to California in various stolen cars and suchlike. Falling off your seat? Well, for the more intellectual Runaways fan their management promise the book of the film and a 'photo novel' with wacky captions extracted from the footage.

A drive-in, all American, good clean dose of probably not very much.

● Also threatening an entry into the film world this year is Dolly Parton who has signed to enter the studios with co-stars Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin. The subject? A feature based on the 9-5 routines of three secretaries. Fascinating stuff, Caruthers.

● Producer Tony Lawrence claims to have seen the ghost of Elvis Presley during the filming of a made-for-TV movie called, appropriately enough, *Elvis* — a film that dramatically discloses secrets about Elvis' private life never before revealed, according to the sordid but highly readable American scandal sheet *National Enquirer*. Such secrets as the Big Cheeseburger's fear of assassination, triggered (sic) by the death of Lee Harvey Oswald at the hand of Jack Ruby.

According to Lawrence, Presley lived with a psychic sense of his own doom for many years. Elvis will be played by Kurt Russell, his mother by Shelley Winters in this Dick Clark funded spectacular.

● And Presley's former wife Priscilla, apart from getting herself hitched to another guy — male model Michael Edwards — plans to make her film debut in another TV movie, this one directed by Burt Sugarman, followed by a series for network. Only in America . . .

MAX BELL

THRILLS

UP CHIC CREEK

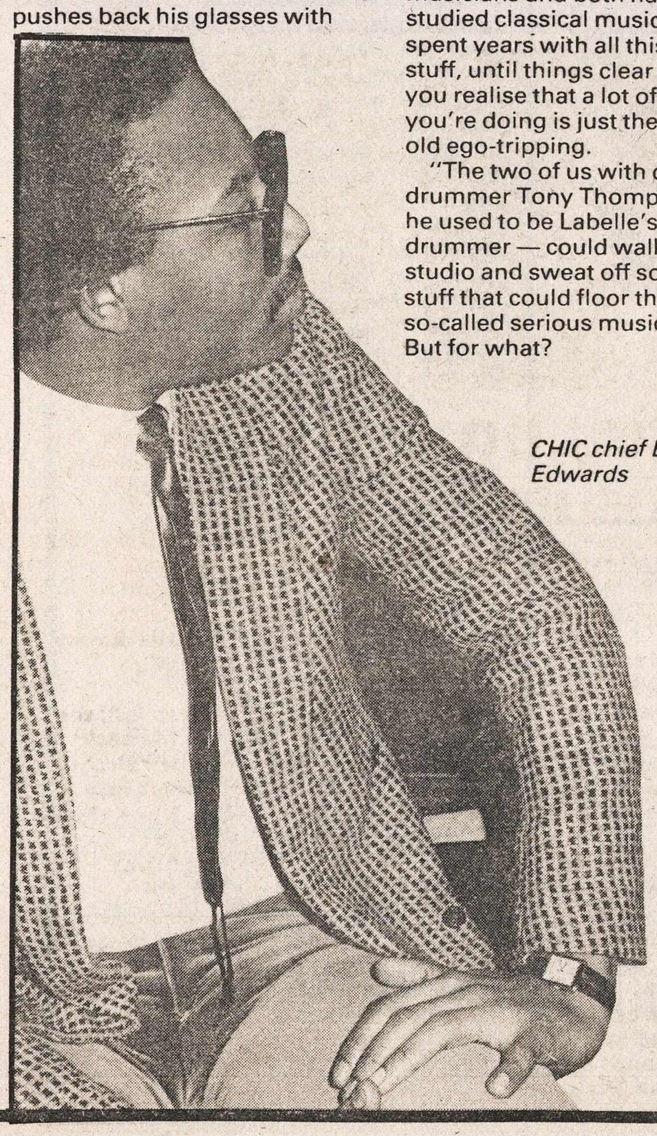
World's Top Group (This Month's Model) tell how. . .

THERE WERE so many good singles last year that when it came to deciding what I thought were the best 45s to show out, I ended up with a bigger list than the Bismark.

In the final tote-up both The Bee Gees and Village People had two prizes each in the Top Twenty, and yet both were shown the door by Chic with "Dance, Dance (Yowzah Yowzah)", "Everybody Dance (Doodoodoodoo)", and their latest fling, "Le Freak".

Even taken outside the China Hall Tavern, away from the bustle, disco lighting, the edge of a weekend night, 100 voices singing the bits that peak — Chic can really play.

So Chic come to town, and I'm on the case. In the Montcalm Hotel, up on the fifth, Bernard Edwards is ushered in to his 15th interview of the day. He looks some real business — close tailored jacket, shirt/tie, butter cutter crease in his strides. He pushes back his glasses with his index finger, and apart from initially calling me David, gives no indication that I probably have a fat 15 invisibly tatooed on my back. Sluicing back the Lowenbrau, I sit back as a band unfolds.



CHIC chief Bernard Edwards

Chic were formed eight months back in New York, and, like Steely Dan, are truly only two musicians who are using a group of semi-permanent members.

One is bassist Bernard Edwards himself, and the other is guitarist Nile Rodgers who's doing another interview next door. They both appear to be in their late 20s, and together they write and produce everything Chic do. Edwards talks fast and confidently, with a good smattering of laughter.

I tell him that after listening to the new album, it's clear that any assembly-line theories go flying out the window. Chic in fact veer toward The Crusaders.

"Uh-huh. Let me tell you, both Nile and I are jazz musicians and both have studied classical music too. I spent years with all this heavy stuff, until things clear and you realise that a lot of what you're doing is just the same old ego-tripping.

"The two of us with our drummer Tony Thompson — he used to be Labelle's drummer — could walk into a studio and sweat off some stuff that could floor these so-called serious music guys. But for what?

"Look, have whatever in your collection at home, but everybody needs a little Friday night. And really that is Chic. No big deal. Y'know, smile, dance, get crazy . . . we sure do while we're making it, because music is our leeezshure, it's my fun."

What separates Chic from the majority of disco acts is their rejection of the show-biz glitter outfits and puppet synch dance routines. If you caught their *TOTP* appearance you saw four men (Nile, Bernard and Tony plus keyboards player), in well-cut but not matching suits, with the girls upfront — Alfa Anderson and Lucy Martin — dressed in their own styles.

In the back are the Chic strings: three girls on violins, including the lovely Cheryl Hong. So how much of the style is planned?

"Oh, I wouldn't say planned at all. You'll know that the girls aren't the sole vocalists — I sing on some tracks, but I always thought that to present that all male show, like Commodores, is really lacking something. So the girls are looking great, singing great and it all helps tone down the, y'know, black funky impression that a lot of bands put over.

"The three women who play violins are very important too, for our balance, our look and our sound. Even though I dislike a lot of strings on a disc — I hate all that German formula shit — I think they add a necessary sweetener to our rhythm."

On the day "Le Freak" turned double platinum in the U.S., I asked where Chic are going.

"Well eventually, Nile and myself would like to back out and let Chic continue with us just producing. At the moment we've still got other things. We've just finished recording Sister Sledge, and next month we go in with Aretha Franklin.

"But while it's still a groove we'd like to just ride it out."

"All that pressure's got you down/Has your head spinning all around/Just come on down to 54/Find a spot out on the floor and freak out/Le Freak — So chic. ."

As it happens, don't worry 'bout 54. The nearest disco pub is dynamite. . .

DANNY BAKER

THRILLS

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THRILLS takes a winter holiday with Spain's favourite Chiswick Records giants, SNIFF 'N' THE TEARS . . .

SNIFFING BACK THE TEARS

I AM LOST somewhere inside Radio Madrid, nursing a monster hangover. I seem to be alone, the only member of a studio audience who's English, over 16 and not bouncing ecstatically on the velveteen seating whilst waving a balloon.

A jovial deejay is jabbering into a microphone, airing singles that are currently storming the Spanish charts — this week's models are Barry Manilow and Sleepy La Beef.

I can only assume from his wild gesticulations that he's introducing another name that's Big in Spain, the latest offering from Chiswick Records, Spanish overnite sensation Sniff 'n' The Tears. With vast promotion Chiswick have lured them out here with promises of much fame, fortune, paella and creme de menthe — which explains the six slightly dazed figures who wander on stage and ease into a live broadcast for national radio. It's only the second gig they've ever played.

It's not so much the songs themselves that sound unconventional, it's their strange mixture of so many different orthodox styles. There's a mass of disco or hard rock drum patterns, funk percussion, loping bass lines, keyboards and classic West Coast guitar, all threaded around the gravelled vocal tones of Paul Roberts. At times it borders on country, but still with its roots in rock and roll.

Whatever, it's mood music. The result is a set, all at Dire Straits-type downtempo, that careers somewhere between massive imbalance and well-oiled precision, and it's most accessible in their debut single "Drivers Seat."

Sniff are certainly big in Spain, as is evinced by scenes of fan-mania after the show, but about the only hint of their existence in the UK was a review penned by our very own Tony Parsons, who rated "Drivers Seat" as single of the week.

"That Parsons thing really blew us away", the Tears' drummer Lu Salvoni confides "He was the last guy we expected to like it. He described it as 'dance music without being disco', which is exactly what we were trying to do."

For the band's leader, mentor and resident aesthete Paul Roberts, that review and the contract with Chiswick have been virtually his only breaks in five years. He's now 30, a well-established artist (his painting "Fickle Heart" is the cover and title of their album) and has fronted a succession of bands, the last of which, formed in '73, was the original Sniff 'n' The Tears.

The name was a reaction to the spate of machismo heavy metal titles around in those long-lost days, and the fact that it's now appropriate, Paul sees as "the irony of the times catching up with you."

The band folded in the face of the funk boom in '74, after cutting a demo at Pathway studios. Paul headed for France to paint for three weeks and didn't resurface until '77, when Lu heard the tapes and talked him into re-forming the band. Lu, who'd drummed for disco/funk band Moon, roped in Moon's vocalist Noel Mc Calla on percussion, guitarist Loz Netto and Alan Feldman on keyboards from FBI, another funk outfit. They made another demo, reeled in bassist Chris Birkin from doleline rock band Phoenix, and were soon to be found, tapes in hand, hammering on the door of Chiswick Records.

Chiswick heard it once and signed them on the spot. Understandably, Paul has been singing their praises ever since. "They had a lot of courage. They had this image, and in a way we were completely different. They'd signed Radio Stars, The Radiators, Skrewdriver and The Bishops, so we really broke the mould."

Making a pitstop at any of the major record labels was evidently out of the question. "We wanted to do the album a certain way," explains Lu, "Paul wanted to do the cover, and I wanted to do the production. I don't think any big company would have taken the chance."

The impression I get from such different attitudes to the music is that of an ideally commercial duo; Paul conceives the ideas and Lu supplies the technique to be able to record them.

"I think that might be a bit true," says Paul. "I tend to think of things in moods. In 'Driver's Seat' I wanted to create a strange mood of alienation, tension and flow. That was what was in the lyrics — a slightly disorientated, hypnotic kind of thing.

"Between the two of us, we manage to get more or less what we want, as Lu understands what I'm looking for as well as I do. I'm a little easy going, whereas he's an absolute tyrant. It's a great combination."

Their insistence on production control is something learnt from years spent slogging round the pub circuit in various guises and falling foul of management restrictions. Hence, too, their (very unfashionable) lack of 'image'. Now the tables have turned drastically as, with an album and single behind them, they've played only two live gigs.

Paul, in road-weary tones, claims that "it's just a myth that a hundred gigs a week and endless rehearsals really make you that great a band; it can also cut out a lot of your spontaneity. Before you've made a record and before anyone knows anything about you, you're playing to a hostile audience, and you have to win them over. The trouble with that is that a lot of the time you may have to make compromises."

"If you're going to do gigs," adds Lu, "I'd rather people came out of curiosity, or because they'd heard a few tracks off the album, rather than them being there and having to put up with it — and hating it."

But *no* image?

"When we get back to England, we're going to find ourselves a whole load of water-pistols and sequinned boiler-suits. I mean, you've got to cut a dash, haven't you?"

MARK ELLEN

THRILLS

L-R Alan Feldman, Loz Netto, Noel McCalla, Paul Roberts, Lu Salvoni.

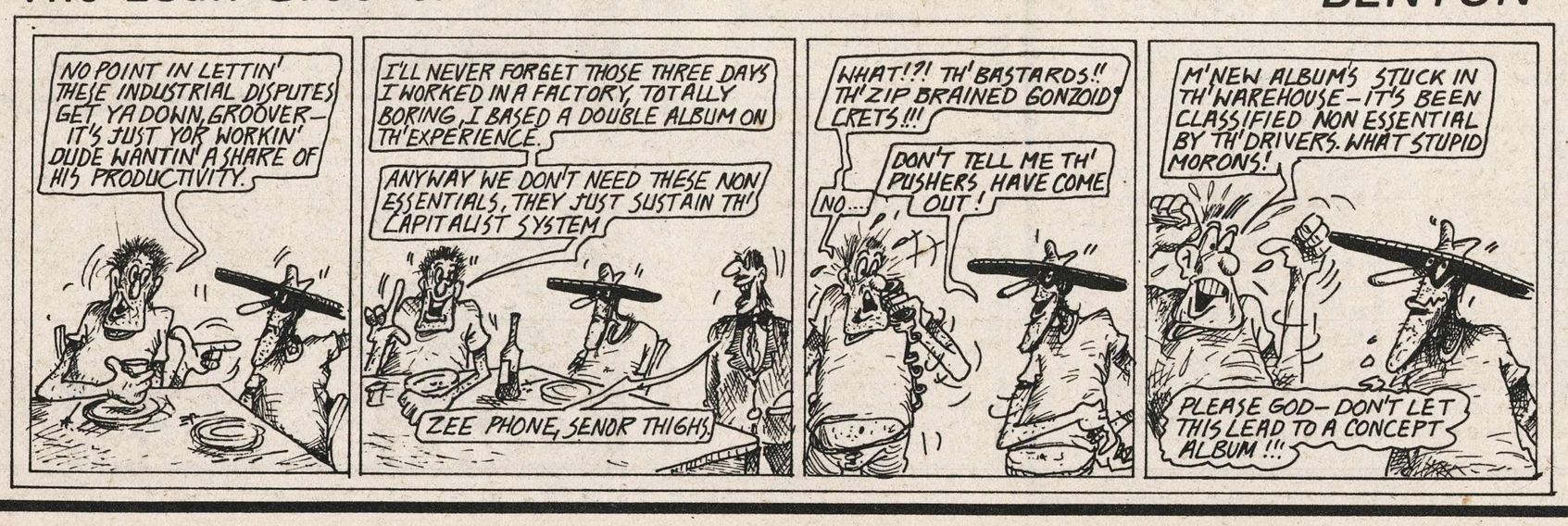
"Here Juanita, why are all these hombres trying to muscle into your publicity picture?" THE SNIFFS gatecrash a picture session for Las Muchachitas — Spain's answer to The Runaways. Pic: ELLEN MARK.

SPOT THE BOZOS COMP WINNER

. . .And when we say 'winner', that's just what we mean — because there was only one spark in the whole UK bright enough to identify these mysterious masked bozos. J. Burchett of Fairford, Glos, step up and collect your prize for correctly naming THE VIGILANTES. We can only surmise that Mr. Burchett was a member of these early '60s weirdos. One LP taken on the way .

The Loan Groover

BENYON


NO POINT IN LETTIN' THESE INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES GET YA DOWN, GROOVER— IT'S JUST YOR WORKIN' DUDE WANTIN' A SHARE OF HIS PRODUCTIVITY.
I'LL NEVER FORGET THOSE THREE DAYS I WORKED IN A FACTORY, TOTALLY BORING, I BASED A DOUBLE ALBUM ON TH' EXPERIENCE.
ANYWAY WE DON'T NEED THESE NON ESSENTIALS, THEY JUST SUSTAIN TH' CAPITALIST SYSTEM
ZEE PHONE, SENOR THIGHS
WHAT!?! TH' BASTARDS!! TH' ZIP BRAINED GONZOID CRETS!!!
NO...
DON'T TELL ME TH' PUSHERS HAVE COME OUT!
M'NEW ALBUM'S STUCK IN TH' WAREHOUSE — IT'S BEEN CLASSIFIED NON ESSENTIAL BY TH' DRIVERS. WHAT STUPID MORONS!
PLEASE GOD— DON'T LET THIS LEAD TO A CONCEPT ALBUM !!!

IN JAMAICA, SOMETHING STIRS

OUT OF Jamaica comes . . *Jah Ugliman.*

"DEI — from whom you cannot hide. Into whom you fear to look. Through which you do not see . . . Jah Ugliman."

Such is the manifesto of Jamaica's first roots reggae fanzine — a glib estimation of this little publication for as the spiky editorial inside seh: "Is not a newspaypa, nida a magazeen. Is more writing upon a wall . . ."

The hand clutching the paint brush — Wha? Ya t'ink ya can jus' buy an aerosol paint spray in Jamaica you no see't — belongs to Carl Gayle, former resident inna London and erstwhile staff reggae writer on *Black Music* magazine back in the ol' daze when reggae was just a speck in the eye of the music biz and reggae journalists were even scarcer than nowadaze (take a bow the Reel/Lane/Hendley mafia).

Besides covering the UK scene, Carl Gayle filed some of the earliest — and best — reports on Jamaica, writing on the likes of the emergent Spear, Gladiators, Diamonds, and many many more. Those articles and his pieces in *Rock File* are still 'ard reading for anyone interested in JA music.

Around the time reggae started to get popular with UK white youth — '76 or so — Carl went to live in JA. De articles would *soon come* — a couple even did — now something/one new and different, *Jah Ugliman*. Written entirely by Carl Gayle, written entirely in phonetic rootspeak . . . "You hear see the word. You hear the sound. Not in agreement wid de English language . . . so let us rewrite the English dictionary . . . we have fe write ova English dicshinary whey dem ave a wash people's brains with. I cannot spell. I spell too well . . ." I and I don't compromise.

The first issue has a long feature/interview on I Jah Man Levi, plus pieces on The Congos, Ras Michael, Keith Hudson, Dirty Harry and a long write-up on last year's Kingston Peace Concert, including a complete transcript of Peter Tosh's infamous obscenity-studded speech.

There's also some intriguing short meditational/devotional pieces including one on Dylan's "Wicked Messenger" (titled 'Wicked Mess In JA') and one evoking Jimi Endrix, not to mention a rebuke of *MM's* Chris Brazier as outstanding representative of the "Why-are-Rastas-so-stupid" school of dumb condescending rock journalism ("You t'ink yu living in Heaven but yu living in wha?").

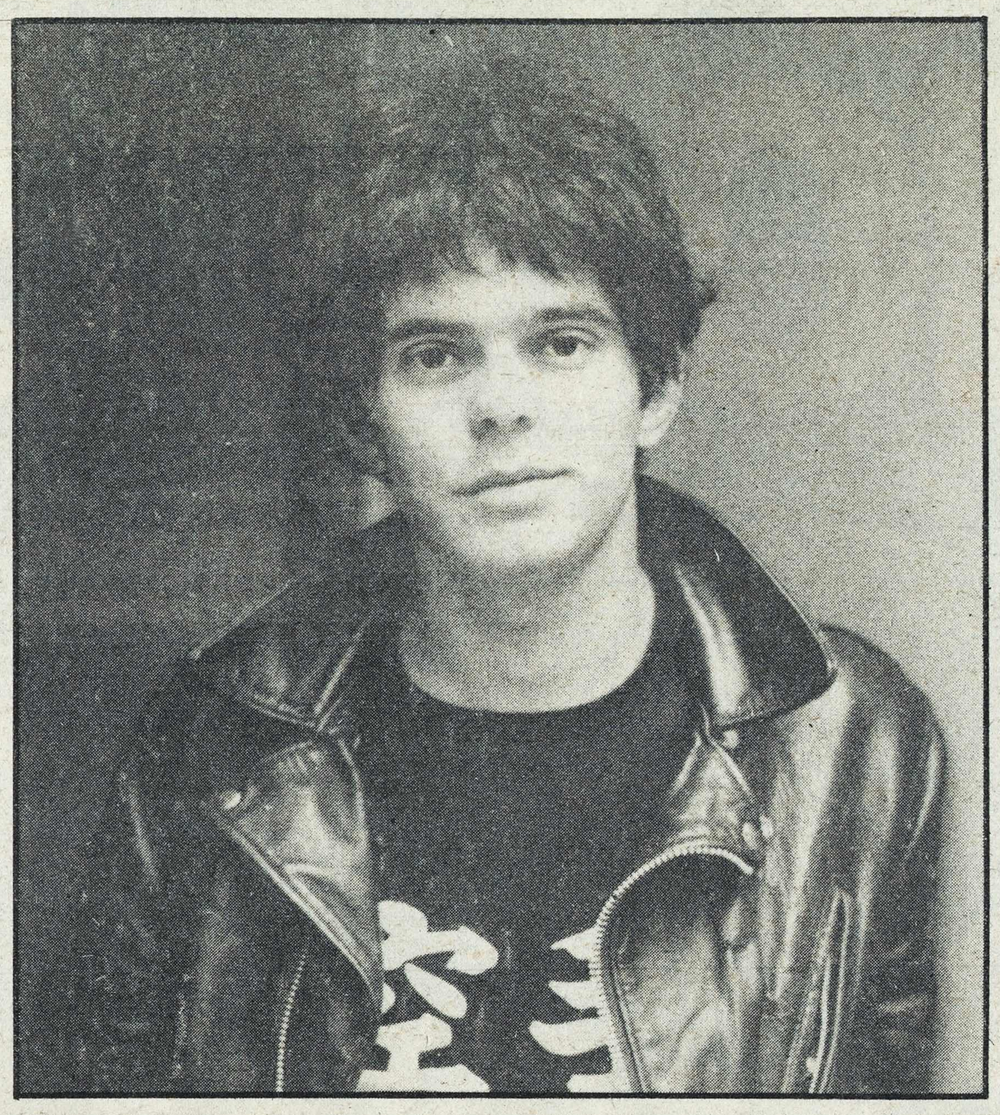
Nor is there any shortage of righteous vitriol elsewhere in *Ugliman* . . . but then the title would tell you as much. It's refreshing rebel reading — the nearest literary equivalent to sitting and reasoning *back-a-yard*. The mag lacks a distributor in this country at present (any offers welcome) but sending the international monetary equivalent to PO Box 1031, Kingston, Jamaica should ensure you a copy of de ickle t'ing. Still, if you are a big tree there is a small axe.

NEIL SPENCER

THE END

SYSTEMS

By JEAN-JACQUES BURNEL



Pic: PENNIE SMITH

Monsieur J-J of The Stranglers wrote this himself — sent it to us of his own free will, desirous of making A Point. Here it comes now.

AFTER THE third death threat the initial excitement tends to wear thin, a bit like amyl nitrate. A while back, I mentioned that American brains were smaller than Europeans'. Well, it would seem that a lot of people on the other side took this literally.

Almost to endorse my view, some went into long treatise on why this could not be, bearing in mind density, weight, cerebral circumference etc. et al shittae. Others just threatened to '... beat the shit out of me'. Yawn. However, not one of the letters left an address.

So I happened to be watching a re-run of *Ben Hur* which, for me, was a first-time. I was looking forward to the chariot race during which, it is said, in the actual making of the scene someone was genuinely (?) killed, when a thought struck me, (yes Snitchelinski I'm ready and waiting you female orifice) which could be of vital importance to the future of mankind.

Now I know it's not original, Shakespeare said the world was a stage and the people in it actors, or something like that and Jean Anouilh made the characters in his plays aware that they were ACTING. It was in the scene when Ben Hur was a galley slave. What if those slaves had refused to row? They would have been killed of course. But what if a subsequent lot of slaves had refused the task and this had escalated?

There would, of course, have been no slaves to man the galleys; maybe Romans would have subjected themselves to the rigours.

Slaves are slaves everywhere but they only remain slaves while they play according to others' rules and allow themselves to be subjected to slavery. We call the rules a system. In our attempts to rationalise our relationships with our fellow men, in our attempts to better our situations, in our attempts to overthrow systems we create and use the discipline of new ones to take their place.

The point is, a system exists only while those subject to it are willing to play its game. "It's a fair cop Guv" indicates that one accepts the jurisdiction of others and that rules have been broken.

So little Tommy Atkins complains, but what does he do about his lot? Mainly fuck all. We can play little games like certain regular writers to this paper, and demonstrate in the streets (with police escorts) and propagate your party's views, but remember who's letting you do all this — the very accommodating system.

Every year the 'democratic' process is increasingly encroached upon, presumably because no-one is aware or no-one cares, so we are all to blame. Every year there are fewer elected government bodies. Government by committee, grey vested interest committee.

If tomorrow everyone refused to pay their taxes as in California, the tax system would be unenforceable. Today we in Britain have one of the most crippling tax structures in Europe; where do all our earnings go to? What happened to Socialist co-operation. They are certainly not re-allocated to the People. We now have one of the lowest standards of living in Europe and one of the largest state bureaucracies.

It was Marx (Groucho) who said "What makes wages slaves are wages". Maybe H.M. Government is trying to save us from this fate." Karl Marx spent most of his life being patronised and financed by a wealthy German capitalist, Engels, so that he could sit in the British Museum and decide another system for the workers. His biggest regret was never to see this system interpreted into fact.

Isn't it ironic the way the Russians treat Marx's fellow Jews? — he would probably have been seeking refuge in a collectivist kibbutz now. As we all know, there are as many interpretations of his visions as there have been of Christ's. South African apartheid can be easily justified biblically by the South Africans.

It would seem that an individual in order to fulfil him or herself can either fight the system at all cost or else join the power struggle and feather their own nest, or at least make the system more accommodating to their own way. Anarchist or citizen. Either way they are in the minority. That great Brother in the Trade Union movement, Jack Jones (retired) now holds the record for achieving membership of government committees. If a man has a vision or an idea of how things could be, can he be blamed for doing his damndest to see his visions fulfilled. Are we not *all* fascists?

Systems have an amazing way of atrophying; they all subscribe to the Sigmeud curve. This curve indicates that everything subscribes to a similar growth pattern, i.e. sharp growth (rise) while young, broadening out in maturity until decline and end.

So obviously the more dogmatic, less elastic, less changeable a system is, the more readily it will be subscribed to the curve's functions. Chairman Mao was aware of this and initiated the Cultural Revolution. U.S.A. is ageing rapidly and declining. Ditto Russia, ditto Britain. "Europe" is young and growing. Our system in Britain is atrophying.

Who could have thought that a "democracy" such as ours could stagnate, but maybe it's no longer a democracy (was it ever?). An over-taxed nation is not free, nor is one on the dole. The welfare system is collapsing due to lack of funds, the educational system is collapsing (whatever happened to those taxes?). There is more illiteracy now than 20 years ago (illiteracy is slavery), it is not even providing the system with its much needed units of labour and after all why does a system provide education in the first place? Only to keep it furbished with its specialists and labour; to perpetuate the system.

Ah, maybe there is great plan behind all these politics of the lowest common denominator. Some may say we don't understand a fucking word of this, Burnel. Would you prefer it was patronisingly, moronically monosyllabic? (Look it up.)

I think I heard someone say so what, that's probably why Jet Black and myself will end up behind bars for the third time in 12 months and Tony Parsnips won't.

● *For reasons of his own, J-J wishes us to point out that this piece was actually written in the middle of last year.*

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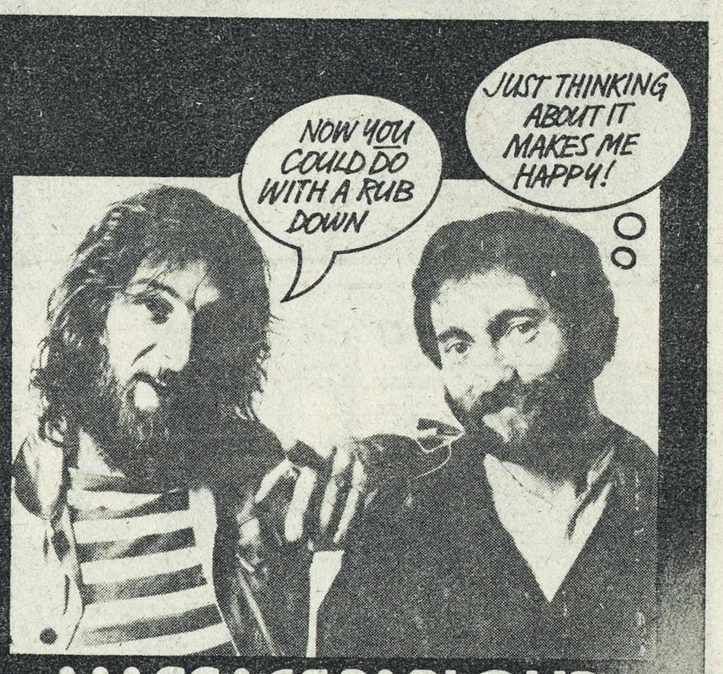

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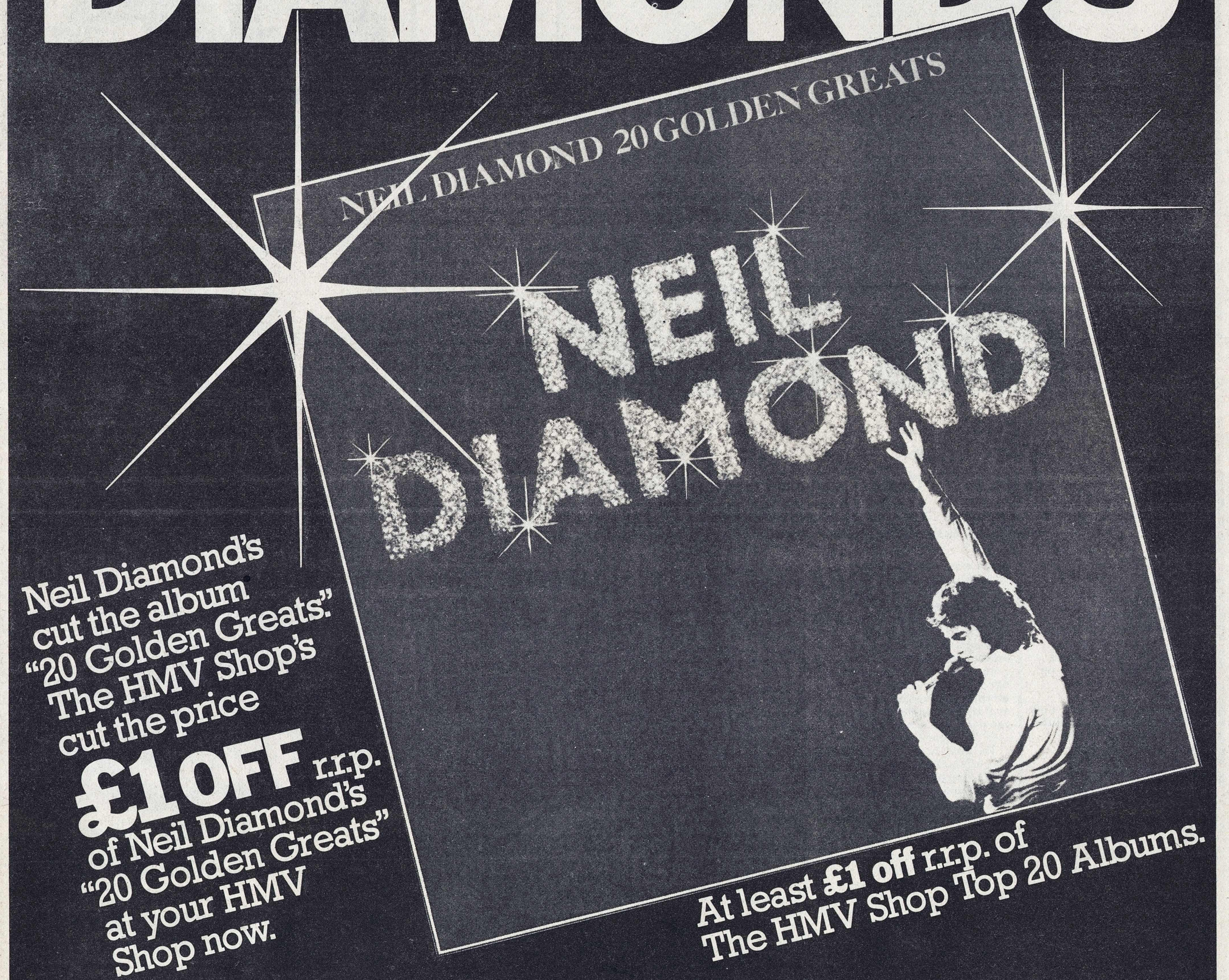

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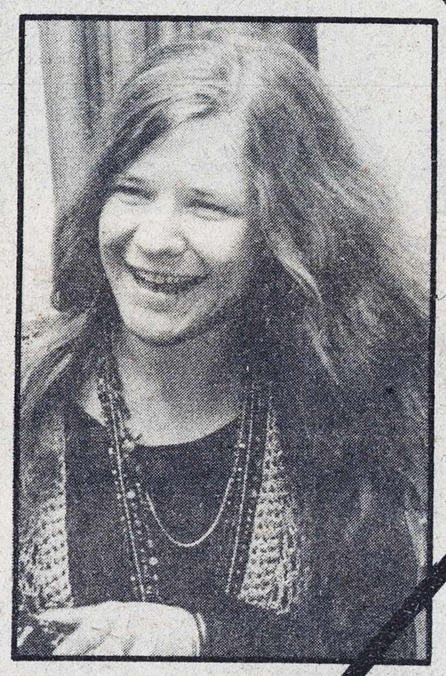
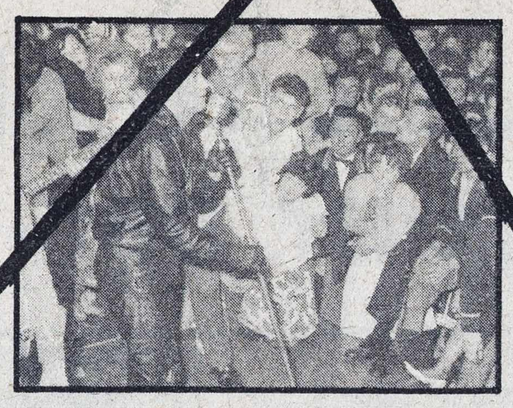
THEY GAVE THEIR SOULS FOR ROCK'N'ROLL





It must be something to do with the weather . . .

MICK FARREN turns a troubled eye on the Rock Mortality Rate and the relentless committment to 'living the life' that audiences expect of artists.

THE WRITER can eventually put down his pen, close the book and turn on the TV. The actor can take off his makeup and go to watch a football game. The rock musician, unfortunately or not, is expected to walk it like he talks it.

With the possible exception of a handful of poets, less than a handful of movie stars, a limited number of comedians and a few wacko one-offs like Evel Knievel, the rock and roll musician is subjected to more audience pressure than any other performing artist.

Nobody really gives a damn what happens to their favourite soccer team once they vanish down the tunnel. Sure the cheap Sundays may make a great big deal out of Stan's gambling or Terry's love life, but most know this is titillation and few get worked up.

In exactly the same way, nobody knows too much about what the neighbourhood politician does once he's mugged and glad-handed his way out of camera range.

Maybe a few get thrown to the wolves. JFK, but only after he'd been dead for 15 years, was revealed as a promiscuous woman jumper. Others, less fortunate, got the treatment while they were still alive enough to breathe.

Only rock and roll, at the real grassroots, maintains such an absurdly high moral tone. Hardly a week goes by without some jerk demanding to know why Bob Dylan doesn't stand on the corner of Bleecker and West 4th giving away all his money, or why The Clash don't travel to work on the bus.

It's conceivably this high moral tone that gives the music such an alarmingly high casualty rate, and also makes it a thing almost totally made up of headlong rushing cycles.

Once you start looking for them, the cycles are easy to spot. The bigger they are, the easier it is, but they all follow a depressingly similar pattern.

The star arrives in a blaze of glory. The audience hitch themselves to his or her wagon. The star burns even brighter as a defined, right-for-the-time image is established by both star and audience. Staying incandescent for a prolonged period is, however, a dangerous and exhausting business. Even the slightest degree of foresight on the part of the star reveals the burnout is not too far down the road.

The big-time list is obvious. Hendrix, Joplin or Charlie Parker didn't croak from making the music. The strain of being the global hoochie coochie man, the slut with a heart bigger than Texas or the all consuming bop king was what laid them low.

Judy Garland wasn't done in by singing, it was the waiting for those damn bluebirds to get to her side of the rainbow.

It certaintly wasn't Sid Vicious's rudimentary bass playing that set him looking down the wrong end of hard times. (Even harder times now. After the bottling of Smith's brother few jurors are going to buy the shadowy third man theory.) What got him was the concept of riding Pistolhood all the way down to the end of the line.

He'd promised the mob he'd do it his way, and in the final analysis his way wasn't the way of even semi-civilised society. Semi-civilised society bit back.

The moral tone of rock and roll must inevitably stem from the initial rebel stand that was the first contact between embryo rock star and audience.

Nobody likes to see a rebel hero get comfortable. Nobody even much likes to see a rebel hero survive. Ideally they want him to go down in a Zapata style blaze of glory. Jesse James only just sneaked into the charts because he happened to turn his back on one of his fans while he nailed up a picture.

There were probably an awful lot of people in Cuba who, straight after the revolution, wanted to know how come Fidel got to ride in the jeep.

For a while Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis ran neck and neck in the outlaw stakes. Then Presley became a model soldier and matinee idol in quick succession, while Jerry Lee kept on keeping on. Lewis rode it to the end of the line, clearly to the point where he could be heard drunkenly explaining that he was simply a devout fundamental Christian who'd sold his soul to the devil. About as crazy as you can get and still be allowed around loose.

Ironically Elvis is dead and Jerry Lee survives, but who said rock and roll would be consistent?

Presley's scoot for sanity — a failure, but never mind — started a kind of flak attack from his fans that was far more intense than anything he'd had to put up with from the Bible belters and anti-sex faction. In the same way, each time Dylan attempted to create some breathing space for himself the pamphleteers ran out their Xerox machines — horrified that their man hadn't allowed himself to be nailed to the cross they'd created for him.

Other heroes have gone willingly to their end. Jim Morrison appeared to. It was in keeping that his moments of glory should have to be paid for in blood. In the Morrison fantasy world of pathological killers and beautiful courtesans, the coin of the realm had to be blood.

Keith Moon appeared to go because there was no way that he could be Moon without being Moon. The crowd demanded wretched excess, two bottles a day and Cadillacs in the swimming pool. It was part of the required daily 24-hour show.

Some, on the other hand, seem to have managed the trick of survival and given the audience the non-stop show they require. Lou Reed, for instance, has managed to satisfy the need of his fans to believe that he lives in a constant state of urban mutant twilight, without falling victim to the kind of squalid doom that is usually the fate of urban mutants.

Somehow he's managed to place the audience in a position where they'll accept just about anything he does. He seems aware that whatever aberrant behaviour he comes out with, the fans will place it neatly in the mosaic they have given him as an image.

On his recent live-at-the-Bottom Line album he spends at least half of the record abusing both fans and critics. He's apparently telling the mob that he's sick to his guts of singing "Walk On The Wild Side" on demand, but they don't either realise or care. They just howl their approval and delight, and probably turn to the person next to them mumbling, "Oh wow, Lou's really over the top tonight."

That's not to say that one day someone won't find Lou Reed in a hotel room with an empty arm and glazed eyes. On the other hand, he's kept it rolling for over a decade, which has to be a considerable achievement.

Another way of surviving the pressure is maybe to take the Tom Waits route. Waits, in his derelict Miles Davis suit and pork pie hat, seems to have evolved a way to avoid ever touching modern reality. On stage, on record and even hanging out in a New York bar, he manages to create a world for himself peopled with 1948 Charlie Bukowski lowlife. Jack Kerouac is about to drive by with a jug of Muscatel and a couple of sticks of reefer. He doesn't have to get involved in the horrors of the current decade. For him, it's still 30 years down the line.

That's also not to say that Tom Waits won't be found in an alley with his wallet gone and his brains blown out by a zoot-suited mugger.

The point of this thesis is that it's frequently the pressure of the off-stage demands of a critical audience who insist on a total image and total commitment from their idols that causes the spectacular casualties.

Don't think, however, that this is a plea for safety standards in rock and roll. Without the moral standard, no matter how warped, the involvement, no matter how fanatical and, of course, the danger, rock music would turn into just another flaccid branch of popular media mush.

Neither is this a plea for the poor harassed rock star. Each and every one embarks on the adventure with both eyes open. If you take the gamble of stepping into the spotlight, the incandescence is quite liable to burn you up. Fans may grieve after a dead superstar, but there's always the bus queue consolation. Another one will be along in a while.

It's this fact that makes this sermonette something more than just a yawnful, theoretical exercise. Right at this moment the survivors of the new wave have to be more than aware of the endless future that stretches out in front of them. Discovering fame and fortune on an iconoclast rip-it-all-down rebel ticket produces a built-in contradiction. How the hell does the street punk remain both feisty and credible when he or she is caught up in a system that provides him with limousines, security guards and luxury hotels?

Even beyond the system, how does the street punk survive when the crowd who want to grab a hold on that credibility have become so vast that the limo, the heavies and the Holiday Inn become a full, physical necessity?

The obvious answer, and the one that the system always tries to impose, is to drop into the luxurious but mind numbing cocoon on instant Rod Stewarthood.

This, unfortunately, would be a negation of everything the new wave ever claimed to stand for in the heady days of 1977. Any one-time new wave rocker who sinks into the big time aspic has to face the moralists who scream that the new wave were a bunch of mouthy kids whose rebellion was only designed to attract enough attention to start them on the climb to the same jet set life enjoyed by the Jaggers and Johns against whom they railed.

So far, the superficial prospects don't seem to be all that bad. John Lydon and Public Image seem to be maintaining a degree of anarchy in their dealings with the business. The Clash, so far, appear to be successfully walking the razor's edge between street and stardom. Costello and The Attractions have managed to pitch for both affluence and excellence without losing the surrealism that was so much a part of their charm.

None of these solutions make for any degree of safety. That's probably the major hope that the new wave simply wasn't another false flash.

In the final analysis, if you want to stay safe on a rock platform there are probably only three options. You can hide behind your computer and create sterile disco music, you can hide behind your instrument and let some other poor bastard soak up the brunt of the crowd's craving for an image, or, like Kiss, you can actually put on a mask and armour so nobody knows who you really are.

Safety doesn't make for good rock and roll, though.

Neither, for that matter, does sitting in a seat near the back soaking it up on a second-hand ticket.

SINGLES

It was either this or the Rovingholme caravan. THE MEMBERS — Pic. DENIS O'REGAN

Music to clean your car to

Reviewed this week by TONY PARSONS

SINGLE OF THE WEEK
THE CURE: Killing An Arab (Small Wonder).
Apparently based on Albert's *The Outsider* and, if so, quite possibly the straw that broke Camus' back. Cymbals crash - once, twice, three times. A guitar, full of eerie promises, slithering like the sprog of some belly-dancer and a poisonous reptile. Pause. Compact bass guitar motif, descending alone. Then those vocals — taut, terse, tense intonation, very much wired and emotional, the scream that a nervous system might make on the verge of metabolic breakdown. A voice like that feeling you get watching the faces on the workaday tube ride after stepping out at dawn for the third time without sleep. Clipped, concise urgency, occasionally cracking when it arrives at a word or phrase it considers particularly emotive — ain't nothing but another beach party on an alien sandy shore! Kick off your Scholl sandals and listen. Monotonic chant:

"Standing on the beach/With a gun in my hand/Staring at the sea/Staring at the sand/Staring down the barrel at the Arab on the ground/Can see his open mouth/But I hear no sound./I'm alive/I'm dead/I'm the stranger/Killing an Arab."

And racism has got nothing to do with it."

THE MEMBERS: The Sound Of The Suburbs (Virgin).
Worthy follow-up to the magnificent "Solitary Confinement" (the best thing Stiff have ever put out). Another change of scenery and they're still not happy and it suits them perfectly.

Gruff, misunderstood, lost, neglected, sardonic. . .like Graham Fellows jilted by life itself, laughing through gritted molars, very much the angry young modern man.

An updated Anglo "Pleasant Valley Sunday".

BLONDIE: Heart Of Glass (Chrysalis).
THE JACKSONS: Destiny (Epic).
MICK JACKSON: Weekend (Atlantic).
EDWIN STARR: I'm So Into You (Pye).
JOHNNY GUITAR WATSON: Gangster Of Love (DJM).
HERBIE HANCOCK: You Bet Your Love (CBS).
Hello, stranger. Look, we can't take back the things already said — but. . .well, I just had to let you know how much I love your "Heart Of Glass". It warmed the cockles of my kidneys, reminded me of just how great that first album was — maybe the finest debut vinyl of all time.

It made me think at long last of the girl striking kung fu poses at the Hammersmith Odeon in a black dress, dancing like a Tom Wolfe Peppermint Lounge Revisisted vision and effortlessly blowing Television out of West London. . .it made me think that *at long last* that girl was exactly where she should be today — down the disco (The Godmother of *Saturday Night Fever?* If you saw those first two UK dates in summer '77, you wouldn't raise an eyelash, kid), possessed by the soul of Donna Summer, the fire of Ronnie Spector and the spirit of Laura Nyro, knocking out the best dance-floor 45 of the week. Easy.

But first the worst, just by way of comparison. . .

Whether you preferred The Jacksons' or Mick Jackson's version of "Blame It On The Boogie" you'll sure as hell prefer either of them to "Destiny" (James Taylor acoustic whimsy meets Marvin Gaye in his "What's Going On?" mood-funk, social commentary period) or "Weekend" (the kind of contrived anticipatory glee that Generation X might write if they wanted to be darkies instead of rebels-with-a-rinse).

It's easy to see why Edwin Starr left Motown — a vocal so sweet that it could charm the birds from the trees and give them cavities in their tiny little beaks all at the very same time. Truly beautiful, art even, but it don't mean a thing if it ain't got something more chewy to get its choppers around than the chronic vapidity of "I'm So Into You", which is pure Frampton live album fodder-pad.

"Gangster Of Love" has always brought to mind a snow-cool Sly Stone swaggering through "No Expectations" with bloozey ethnictisity, and it still sounds as good as ever. The hyper-mercenary Herbie "Dogs Of Disco" Hancock, however, is soon for the jazz dens once more. No chart action this time round, Herb mon, not with all that synthesized sub-*Shaft* wailing wah-wah and a brass section so darn funky it makes Joe Loss look like The Sunshine Band.

Which leaves Blondie: the Yellow Headed one torching it up like a black Julie London. I stand by all previous statements. I must doff my titfer to this.

MARLENE DIETRICH: Just A Gigolo (EMI).
Starts off like Joni Mitchell on Mandrax and soon gets even better. Bowie's nicked more off this *grande dame* than Anthony Newley cares to admit. Beautiful.

SHAKIN' STEVENS: Endless Sleep (Epic).
Adequate reading, but the underbelly is the one to be treasured; one of Springsteen's finest unrecorded songs, the immaculate "Fire", done just like Eddie. Bless you, Shakin'.

IVOR BIGGUN: Hello My Baby (Beggars Banquet).
Rockbiz-speak "expanding potential consumer market" is usually applied in cases like this — a serious record from Ivor Biggun, though artistic acceptance seems a long way off until (a) he changes his Biggun by deed poll and (b) desists from writing poxy songs.

THE UNDERTONES: Get Over You (Sire).
THE JERKS: Cool (Lightning).
This week's young hopefuls U.K. division — and the difference between them is that The Jerks have got legendary Leeds basket-weaver Simon Snake and The Undertones haven't. The latter churn out pre-Immediate (aka vintage) Small Faces R&B with a good Marriott turn out front. Pretty much okay, but who really needs it?

Snake, on the other hand, exudes charismatic angst from every pore of his gangling albino frame. His snotty *savoir-faire* sparks the band into paroxysms redolent of a Yorkshire Velvet Underground when they were still fresh and youthful. Sometimes known as The Ugliest Man Alive — nobody ignores him. Well, hardly anybody.

CONTROLLERS: Slow Boy (Siamese).
THE WEASELS: Beat Her With A Rake (Siamese).
Promised Land California!

The tarnished glamour! The magnetic mythology! The vitality, dreams, excitement and smog fumes sweating with the stench of frustrated ambition!

Hollywood! AKSHUN!

Actually, no. Like most of punkalifornia, these two confine the atmospheric meat and gristle of the matter to their press releases.

Both sound like they heard the first Ramones album 18 months after everybody else, but even so they've still had more than enough time to get it right by now. Controllers would have been a wow at that UNICEF benefit for kiddies, as they make no bones about their egalitarian beliefs.

"He's a slow boy/He's a slow boy/He's a slow boy/You're a slow boy/I'm a slow boy/We're all slow boys/Haw! Haw! Haw!/Hur! Hur! Hur!"

The mongoloidic laughter is done a little too well for their mothers' peace of mind.

The Weasels wish they were Yukio Mishima with warm sperm and warmer blood dripping all down the front of that nice clean kimono. But then again, maybe I'm just reading things into it.

THE RUBINOOS: Falling In Love (Beserkley).
THE BOYFRIENDS: Last Bus Home (UA).
THE BABYS: Every Time I Think Of You (Chrysalis).
Casting aside dewy-eyed the fond memories of magic moments past (respectively, the boyish grandiose, "Think I'll Get Stoned Now", the Bohemian Rupturish, "Isn't It My Time?" and the Jagger-derived chantette, "Hey, Boyfriend, I Wanna Get You Off My Back") you'd have to be Plato after jacking-up a gram of bromide to beat the meat to this bovine bunch.

The Boyfriends do a pretty good impression of a cow-eyed Costello (who, it has yet to be said, sounds exactly like Manfred Mann's Paul Jones), forsaking public transport for one last heavy pet and having to hoof it with just forlorn organ for company.

You could identify with the disturbing obsessive psychosis of "Every Time I Think Of You" if it wasn't clear that The Babys haven't anyone in mind apart from their accountant.

The Rubinoos enjoy a semblance of credibility because they're on a hipesque label (i.e. one with whacky/left-field/experimental product and commercial pratfall sales graphs) but they fake it even worse than the Stones and are more cloying than Little Jimmy Osmond's Listermint. They certainly believe in hedging their bets.

What gets on one's tits about these toothy-beam bands is that they don't take the trouble of a little *research*. Those pre-pubescent adolescents don't want a fraternity pin from some mop-top gelding — they want John and Livvy. They don't want the wet-dreaming virgin next door — they want DIRTY SEX, that's the one that they want.

Being a Power Popper means never having to say you're horny.

KARL TERRY AND THE CRUISERS: Haunted House (Rox)
Monster Mash with a Duck's Ass. Greasy.

MACHO: I'm A Man (EMI).
A perusal of the plastic has you anticipating innovatory Village People meets Traffic fare, but it's yer standard eight-to-the-bar after-shave back-beat from a late-'70s name with a mid-'60s song that'll leave you pining for the '80s.Effeminate.

RICHARD HELL & THE VOIDOIDS: The Kid With The — (Radar).
The junk-sick nihilism is a bit thin on the ground here; lyrics are for the most part indecipherable — but don't start getting the impression that Dick's disc ain't got its bad points, too.

The Vapoids sound like some listless travesty of an Albertos HM piss-take, Hell's larynx adopts that thin, reedy, shot-through vocal peculiar to artistic Americans, and there's Alvin Lee rivet-punching nostalgia on "lead" "axe", "Wallyman". Please kill me, indeed, Richard.

UFO: Doctor, Doctor (Chrysalis).
So butch it makes Bad Company look like a gaggle of screaming panty-waists.

EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS: Media Messiahs (Island).
A featherweight "We Are The Champions", bursting out all over with the bitter bilge of peaking some three years ago.

CHAS & DAVE: Massagre Parlour (EMI).
The missing link between Patrik Fitzgerald and Judge Dread. Euphemistical.

SANTANA: One Chain (Don't Make No Prison) (CBS).
"One chain don't make no prison,/Two wrongs don't make no right,/One rain don't make no river,/One punch don't make no fight."
Consciousness-raising stuff. Not as exhilarating as The Osmonds' "One Bad Apple (Don't Spoil The Whole Bunch, Girl)" but much more swarthy.

SPHERICAL OBJECTS: Seventies Romance (Object Music).
This group (they don't sound like a *band,* thank Christ) have a most pleasing little noise about them: something off the *What's New Pussycat?* soundtrack, is it? But we can only pray they never *ever* attempt to cover "Little Red Book" because permitting that histrionic music-hall ham on vocals anywhere near a microphone is a crime against humanity as callous as letting The Dickies into a recording studio. *"This bit's so really neat!"* is a good line, but mostly they just try too hard to hold your attention by being enigmatic.

ROD ARGENT

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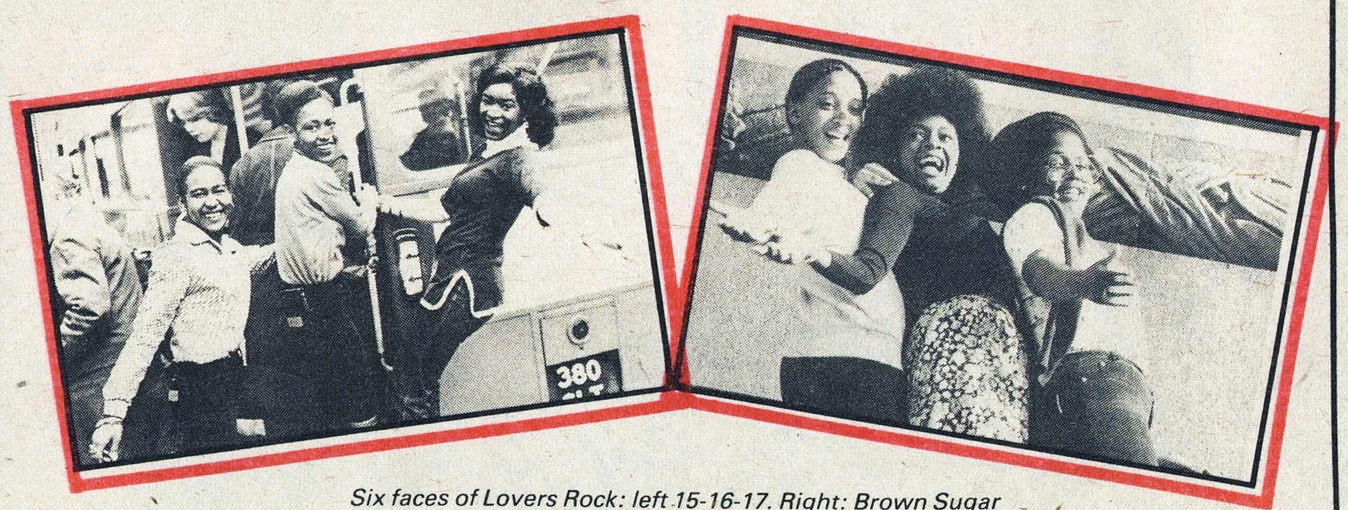
THE PUBLISHERS REGRET THAT SOME ADVERTISEMENTS IN THIS ISSUE HAVE HAD TO BE OMITTED

LOVER'S ROCK ROOLS OK

Say hello to the schoolgirl revolution and the shortest cut to cleaning up in UK reggae.

And ya thought reggae was all about guns, ganga, and God.

PENNY REEL puts you wise. (Ya no see't etc.)



Six faces of Lovers Rock: left 15-16-17. Right: Brown Sugar

I DON'T exactly *check* lover's rock, you no see't, but it's well cool in dark, crowded, perfum'd clubs.

The prerogative of any girl who ever wore a tartan skirt three inches from her ankles and black stockings, 'Lover's Rock' is presently the commercial highspot of reggae music in the UK, and has been so for the past two years.

"Cover a soul hit, preferably with a girl singer," says Greensleeves' Chris Cracknell testily, "put it out on a discomix, and that's the market." He turns gloomily back to his Augustus Pablo dubs.

"We started the Hot Stepper's label to cater for lover's rock," he continues, "and put out that Cygnus tune; but we're discontinuing the label. I'm totally disillusioned with the music, it's doing me head in Penny."

A lot of people in reggae have little good to say about lover's rock, but when it comes to the very serious business of getting it on *everybody* dances to it.

And that's the whole point. The term 'lover's rock' itself has only been in currency since it was coined by producer and label owner Dennis Harris in 1977, but the motion it defines has been around ever since the first two people got it together. Say so.

And when the gathered congregation gets mellow and sweet around about 3am on a wet Sunday morning, in tune to a sound system like Chicken Hi Fi or Soferno B; and as cut succeeds sentimental cut on the turntable; for a while at least you can forget the Babylon pressure. When the rhythm hits you, you gotta stick with it, just hold up a dawta and wine; bwoy you don't even check a next music!

Because the way the scene operates at the moment, lover's rock and its derivatives and relatives is the single dominant musical style in reggae, with even dub-oriented sound-systems like Coxsone and Fat Man increasingly including it in their repertoire of stricter militant sounds, and attracting a greater proportion of female followers as a direct result.

Nor is lover's rock confined to the sound systems alone. Whereas most reggae singles sell no more than a few thousand copies at most, lover's rock titles shift in tens of thousands, and continue to sell. Every week new titles and new artists make their appearance on wax in response to a seemingly insatiable demand from its audience.

You got it: there's a boom on, and at least in one corner of this miserly earth people are grooving on love.

GOLD rush considerations notwithstanding, lover's rock can claim no real departure from mainstream Jamaican music. If its people didn't exactly discover close dancing, they certainly invested it with more expressive nuance than hitherto.

Groups such as the Jiving Juniors (led by Derrick Harriott), duos like Keith & Enid, and solo vocalists such as Tony Gregory and Wilfred (later Jackie) Edwards were the popular names of sentimental balladeering in the early development of the recording industry, but it was not until the rock-steady era of the mid '60s that the style took definite hold on its audience's imagination — some would say reached its peak — eclipsing the traditional folk themes and moral tales (from Jehovah to Annancy) of ska, and which were to recur prominently again in the roots/Ras Tafarian preoccupations of the '70s.

As well as distilling all the tonal elements that continue to exert pervasive influence on popular Jamaican music, rock-steady was also the generative of all its giant names; harmony trios like The Heptones, Paragons, Techniques, Silvertones, Gaylads, and Sharks; while fertile soloists like Alton Ellis, Slim Smith, and Ken Boothe, among many, deployed a style that has been the keynote of reggae vocals ever since.

John Holt from The Paragons went on to enjoy an uninterrupted reign of popularity in the genre that reached its climax with his "1,000 Volts" LP of 1973. During 1974/5 a movement of teenage girls a flutter brought about a Ken Boothe revival on the reggae scene, culminating in a performance that eventually even penetrated the wider nation's consciousness when "Everything I Own" went on to become a No. 1 national hit. Dennis Brown, Gregory Isaacs, and Pat Kelly are among the more consistent artists to ply similar expression in recent times.

This is all elementary, but the promotion of Bob Marley to a rock audience from 1973 onwards provoked media bias to the more ostentatious images of reggae, with a distorted, even spurious preoccupation with all things dread, dub, and ganga, and much remains unexplained. A more balanced reflection of the music's true attitude was that reflected by its audience's own personal taste, which has been largely disregarded.

During the 1974 summer season it was the Dennis Walks "Margaret" moodisc, and local lady Ginger Williams' "I Can't Resist Your Tenderness" that were dominating sound-systems everywhere. Both dealt with the boy-meets-girl theme, produced in the understated sentimental style that was to characterise lover's rock three years on, and in many ways serving as its model.

The mainstay of the lover's rock market was to consist of comprehensive schoolgirls; and, barely out of gymslips themselves, black female singers were accurately interpreting the same sentiments of their contemporaries and former schoolmates. It was this repository of disregarded womenfolk that, at the record's peak, were buying "Tenderness" in greater volume than many of the discs in the national top twenty were selling during the same period, even though it never charted.

Louisa Mark, who emerged the following year, was to emphasise this point. A Lloydie Coxsone protege of barely 14 years old, Ms Mark won instant favour with the reggae audience when her debut interpretation of Bobby Parker's "Caught You In A Lie" — a tune firmly embedded in the archetypal unconscious of the local Jamaican community — became the hit of the year.

Following a couple of years' silence, during which time Louisa completed her education under the duress of seemingly endless management and record company wrangles, including a brief Trojan contract, she was taken under the wing of producer Clem Bushay to re-emerge last year at the height of the lover's rock explosion with two of the genre's most endearing discomixes: "Even Though You Are Gone" and "6 Six Street", both hugely successful in '78, with the latter still in heavy demand now. A singer of impressive range and force, Louisa Mark always brings her personality to bear on the heartbreaking material she sings so evocatively, and her volatile spirit is already legend in reggae circles. I admire her courage tremendously.

It was Jamaica, though, which provided the final impetus, if one was needed. Immediately prior to lover's rock definition as such, the style was being determined in the productions of studios like Channel One, King Tubby's, and Joe Gibbs, especially in their regurgitations of rock-steady rhythms.

Dennis Brown's "Visions" LP, Marcia Griffiths' "Naturally", Leroy Smart's "Superstar", as well as individual efforts from Ruddy Thomas, In Crowd, Cornel Campbell and others were further indications of lover's rock's commercial potential; and the point was finally driven home by Delroy Wilson's recut of The Wailers' "I'm Still Waiting", which enjoyed perennial sound-system sponsorship through the length of '76 and early '77.

LEWISHAM label-owner Dennis Harris began his Lover's Rock label in mid '77 with issue of a tune entitled "I'm In Love With A Dreadlocks" by Brown Sugar — a female trio. The girls had previously recorded a couple of unremarkable efforts for Mr. Harris's Lucky label, and "I'm In Love With A Dreadlocks" had already in fact been issued as a limited edition "pre" for the sound-systems. It was here that the tune first generated excitement, convincing Harris to make it available on general release.

The tune was an instant No. 1 hit, as was the follow-up, "Black Pride", while a third release from the trio did almost as well; Barbara Lynn's "Hello Stranger" which came with an arrangement courtesy of the "I'm Still In Love With You" rhythm, itself later to find national fame as "Uptown Top Ranking". From nowhere, Brown Sugar had emerged as one of the year's top selling singles acts, reggaewise.

Lover's Rock consolidated its reputation as a hit label with similarly commercial waxings from duo Rolan & Carolyn Catlin and "I Admire You" (another No. 1), and "You're Having My Baby"; Ms Catlin's solo on Marcia Griffiths' "Peaceful Woman"; Cassandra's "If You're Not Back In Love By Monday" and "I'll Never Let You Go Out Of My Life"; and the white songstress T T Ross improving upon her 1975 local hits "Last Date" and "Single Girl" with "Jealousy" and "I Will".

The same year brought about a rash of issues in the style, with local producers quick to see its commercial implications.

Undoubtedly, however, the greatest act in popular terms was the 15-16-17 trio, who were based on the Brown Sugar line-up, and eventually came to emulate them.

Recording for the DEB label under the guidance of Castro Brown, 15-16-17 began their career in less than auspicious fashion with a reedy recut of The Gaylads' "Red Rose", and struck gold with their follow-up, "Black Skin Boys" *("are better")*, a racist sentiment to be sure, but one readily echoed by the legion of black skin girls — not to mention a number of their white skin sisteren — who bought the record.

Throughout 1978 the girls notched up a string of lover's rock discomix monsters that included "Emotions" (yes, the Bee Gees number). But that was the peak of their success, and interest in 15-16-17, who often betray their untutored inexperience live, has somewhat diminished.

Another producer who reaped the benefits of his lover's rock titles during 1978 was Delroy Witter, a Wembley-based sound-system operator who featured the genre heavily on his Success Sound.

Further triumphs came the way of Jama's Cool Notes group on "My Tune"; Revelation's "With You Boy" out of the Leyton-based Write Sounds; Trojan's Marie Pierre and "Walk Away"; and Junior English with "In Loving You".

From Jamaica, The Tamlins group recorded for a variety of producers, recutting rock-steady titles in a lover's rock style to bewitch UK audiences with "Hurting Me", "Ting A Ling", "Undying Love" and "Stars".

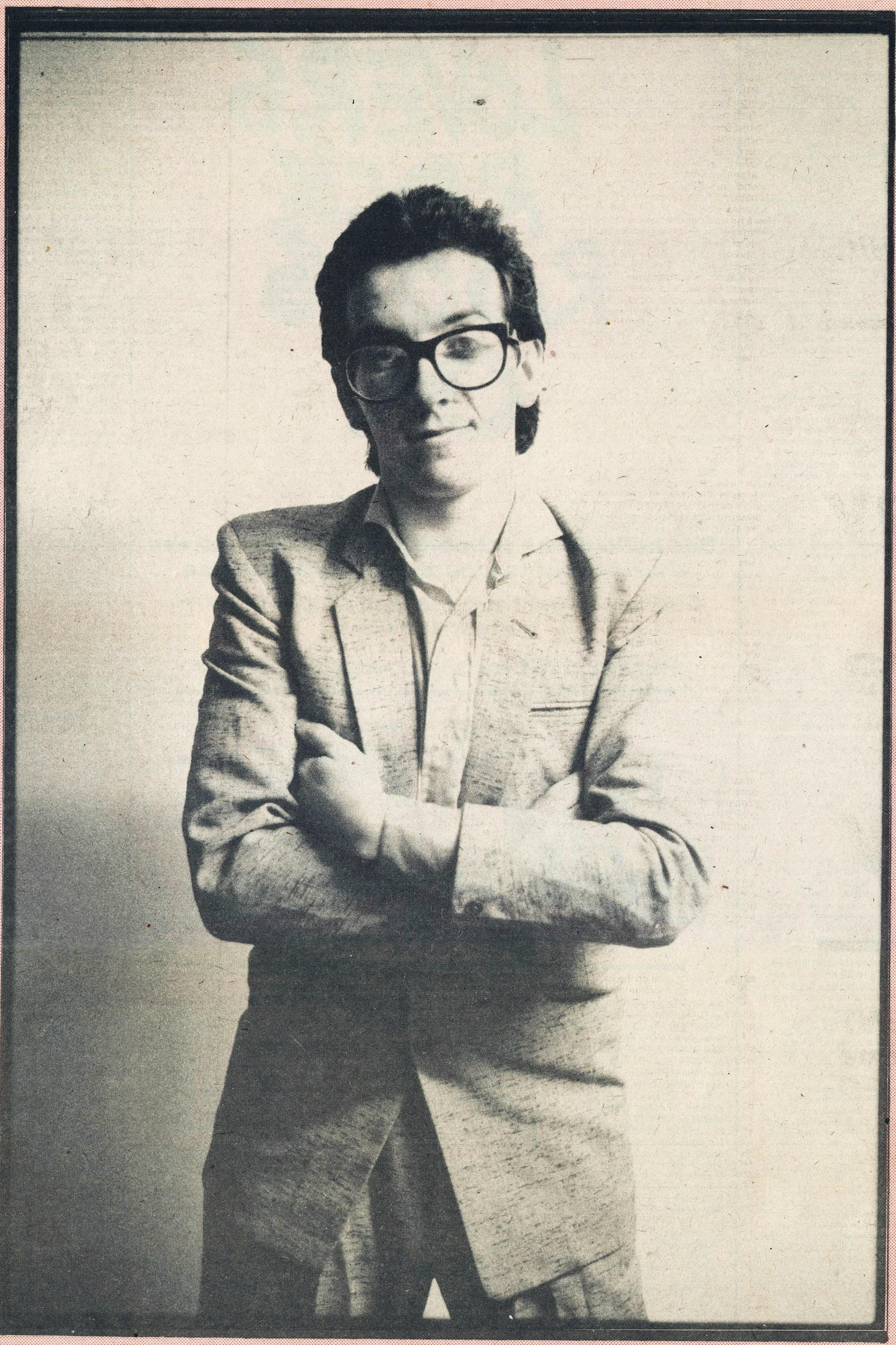
In similar vein, The Heptones, garnered action on "Crystal Blue Persuasion", as did Pat Kelly who made a big impact during the year with "I'm So In Love", "You Send Me", and "No Love". Big as ever, of course, was the inexorable Dennis Brown, scoring on "Money In My Pocket", "How Can I Leave", and "The Half", among others.

Of the newer labels working the genre, Patrick Cann's Arawak outlet is probably the hottest at the time of writing.

And if your interest has been sufficiently whetted, other recent releases in the style include T T Ross' "Won't Mention It Again" and "Tonight" on Dennis Harris' new Love Bird Discomix label, Lover's Rock now having been discontinued; Tabby of The Diamonds and "It's Gonna Take A Miracle" for Soundoff; I Society's "Sad Movies" and "It's True" for Starlight; Cornel Campbell's "Whenever You Need Me" for Thompson Sounds.

Or, as the anonymous graffitist in North London say: "Lover's rock rools OK."

Photography: PENNIE SMITH



The Horm Rimmed Heavy akes A Hit

Elvis Army Is Here To Stay

NICK KENT erves time with the EC oon Squad nd learns about Emotional Fascism

CHAPERONED in the back of a hire car, taking in the sights, partaking in entertaining chit-chat about the industry with fellow passengers, I shouldn't feel this damned uneasy. But impending duties weigh heavy and a sizeable part of me is getting more and more dispirited about the deal I've gotten into.

The brief was simple enough: an interview with Costello was all that was required by the firm, the only problem being the subject had spent the past year making it plain to the world's press that he didn't wish to converse whatsoever, to the point where recourse to physical violence had not been uncommon as a final solution in nailing the point home. Manager Jake Riviera once defined a potent side of the Costello personality when he pinpointed that line from The Talking Heads' "Psychokiller" — "Say something once, why say it again" — as being his protege's essential credo. Thus, when the obstreperous, over zealous Jimmy Olsens of this world have found their way backstage at an E.C. gig and ignored that first denial for a quick quote from the star, the outcome has turned distinctly ugly, with fists flying and subsequent reportage of the *contretemps* making for depressing reading.

Speaking to Riviera on the phone a couple of days before this drive up to snowbound Sheffield, he was amenably adamant about the no-go interview situation: "We've finally reached the stage where they've all got the message and nobody bothers us for interviews."

Approximately a year before, however, Costello did break his silence to give me an interview just as "This Year's Model" hit the stores — the only interview he consented to in '78 despite apparently unrelenting pressure from record companies and the like. (Without going into details that have as much to do with coincidence as anything flattering in reality, Costello deemed yours truly the only journalist worthy of his trust and consequent occasional documenting of his intentions and so forth after our first interview in the summer of '76).

In all fairness, the *NME* has had pretty easy access to Costello thus far, an access denied to all other periodicals, and so with a new year and a new Costello album to contend with, it was a natural and desirable to procure a third encounter of the close kind with the myopic boy wonder. Already a weekly rival was openly attempting to woo Costello into an interview by plastering him over their cover and voting "Model" record of the year. The *NME* chose the opposite course of action, of resolute editorial detachment.

At first it seemed straightforward; just latch onto the Costello UK tour at some likely whistle-stop, infiltrate the camp and having once lucked out on some sympathetic little scenario wherein El and I would be alone, coax the prized confessional and return triumphant to headquarters. Hit, git and split, the name of the game is professional journalism and it was my turn to play it like the big boys.

All of which brings you back to the scene with the professional journalist in the hire car pondering the assignment at hand, at once looking forward to the task and yet feeling oddly depressed.

THE official deal on the Riviera-Global (Costello's managment) end was uncomfortably double edged. I could talk to Costello, sure, but there would be no official interview.

Personally, I saw no reason why Costello should do an interview anyway. In the motor whilst idly perusing one of the music rag's, I'd come across the quote "silence makes legends", which in its given context (manager Peter Grant's jive explanation for Bad Company's slug-like dormancy this past year or so) was laughable, but in regard to Costello made perfect sense.

In a purely objective light the fact that Elvis is a loquacious and intriguing subject seems secondary to the contention that it's an art in itself to remain inscrutably silent in the face of continual media harassment and that those who have successfully kept mute — the Dylans and De Niros — usually just coincidentally happen to be the mightiest talents in their particular line of work.

Take a rain check on Elvis Costello's current state of grace on the rock front — and let's dispense with the unneccessary superlatives — and one is near blinded by the fact that here is a man playing for "big stakes". I mean, let's ignore his popularity over here in Blighty a moment and note that Costello is the first New Wave artiste (along with Talking Heads who skipped lightly over the lower echelons of that US Top 30 with their second release) to make an appreciable dent on the ultra-reactionary American market. All the rest of the New Wave's diverse constituents haven't done more than tickle the soft white underbelly of the great hulking beast.

Unsettling, irritating he may be to the smug Yank megabuck big boys but in '78 they all learnt it's better not to underestimate Elvis Costello.

It was the veritable hailstrom of activity surrounding and being perpetuated by Costello and his crew in the last 12 months or so that provided one with the basic bait for this whole affair. No-one else is currently working at such an audacious pace. "This Year's Model" was released at the outset of '78 and left virtually everybody reeling, except for the artist himself who was already putting the final syntax on his next little volume.

From there on out, the sky seemed the limit. Costello and the Attractions toured all over the world ceaselessly. The 52 states of America were all traversed unrelentingly, in Australia Costello's feisty manner caused a nasty little riot, and finally in Japan The Attractions scored yet another accolade by being the first New Wave band both to visit the country and play small clubs instead of large halls.

When not doing concerts, the band were in Eden studios for two weeks, knocking out 17 tracks, 12 of which formed the "next album", tentatively titled "Emotional Fascism" but finally known to all as "Armed Forces" (title gratis Attractions drummer Pete Thomas). Another cut — "What's So Funny 'Bout Peace, Love And Understanding" — was cheekily released under the name of the song's composer, one Nick Lowe, as a single late last year. Another, "Tiny Steps", made an impromptu appearance on the B-side of "Radio Radio" and another two peaches ("Wednesday Week" and "Talking In The Dark") emerged on a collector's only item handed out to the lucky folk who made it to the Dominion gigs over Christmas. Only one song "Clean Money" remains unreleased in any form whatsoever, going the way of other stray Costello items like "Dr Luther's Assistant" and "Crawling To The USA" which somehow don't quite cut the final test with their creator.

MEANWHILE '78 also saw Elvis getting chummy with many of his peers and even some heroes of yore. The cryptic country waltz — "Stranger In The House" — last sited on the "Model" freebie 45 was chosen by Billy Sherrill, producer of country music giant George Jones, as a suitable number for inclusion on a special "George Jones Duets With His Contemporaries" album. Costello was thus elected to join the likes of Willie Nelson, Dolly Parton and Linda Ronstadt out in Nashville for the sessions, although an elated El never got to meet his hero as Jones, pretty much a ruined man owing to chronic alcoholism, was too sick to make the session, appearing later to overdub his vocals to Costello's counterpoint.

And then there was Bob Dylan who'd been introduced to Costello's music by the Alpha Band's (and current Dylan sideman) Steve Soles and, impressed with what he heard, went out of his way to meet this young contender. Costello and Dylan first met in Los Angeles and struck up a friendship that apparently blossomed when the two outfits by chance found themselves touring Europe at the same time (at an Amsterdam gig, The Attractions' backstage list credited "Bob Dylan plus 30"). Dylan, by all accounts a pretty fastidious sort who chose to while away the hours sequestered in his hotel room obsessively reading his Tarot cards, even fell in love with the relatively outrageous (compared to the dour, timid bunch the Big D was toting around anyway) behaviour of The Attractions and seemed an all round decent sort of chap.

As did one Bruce Springsteen, another burgeoning E.C. fan who came backstage to acquaint himself and to find out, apparently how, Elv got the sound on his "Aim" album. A remarkably mild-mannered sort, he only got visibly upset when addressing the subject of Patti Smith's "Because The Night", apparently procured by "Easter" producer and the Jerseyites' old engineer Jimmy Iovine in a decidely dodgy fashion.

Even Linda Ronstadt, undeterred by Elvis' documented broadsides against her in the past, made overtures about having a tentative *tete a tete* with the man behind the horn rims. Costello may yet condescend to the encounter if only because Ronstadt's pathetic mis-reading of "Alison", more than any other endeavour, has lined his wallet with an unexpected royalty cheque of at least some 60,000 dollars. However, it would be wise for her not to hold her breath . . .

All this flashy foldirol is only one side of the overall picture, however. Over these past 12 months, whilst manager Riviera and bassist Bruce Thomas both chose to wed their respective ladies, Costello's marriage collapsed in circumstances that are obviously nobody else's business. In what many viewed as a particularly bizarre move, Costello left his house in Whitton to move into a flat in Kensington with Bebe Buell, one time *Playboy* pin-up, well known model and former girlfriend of such as Todd Rundgren and most recently, until her meeting with Costello, Rod Stewart. As the year ended harried lawyers were seen attempting to track down Costello in order to serve divorce papers. A particularly touchy situation as it stands, the affair has made Elvis even more determinedly guarded about his privacy than ever.

Meanwhile amid this personal strife, Costello, his band and manager Riviera have to face up to easily the heaviest professional manoevres of their career. Having viewed Costello as very much in the Springsteen mould of burgeoning megastar, US Columbia are determined to go all out on their third shot in much the same way as they did with "Born To Run". Riviera knows the score exactly "We either make it all the way with 'Armed Forces' or we don't. If this album doesn't break in America, then Columbia will still keep us but we'll be considered pretty much a spent force."

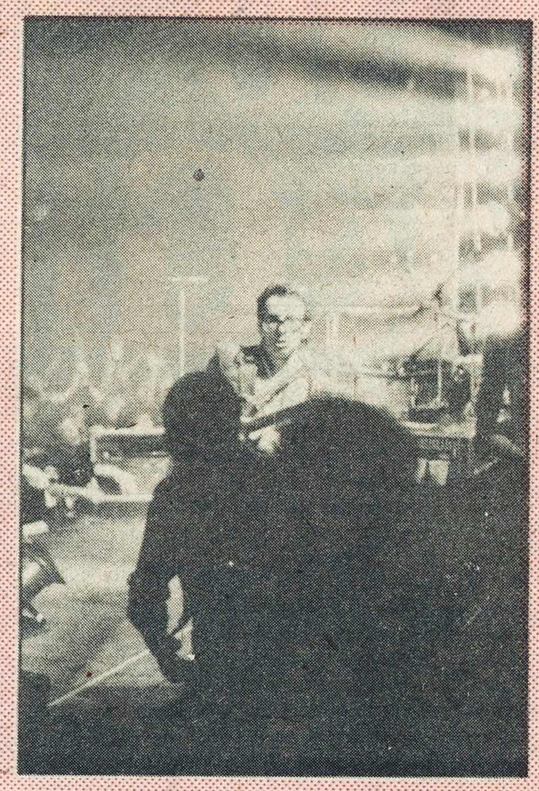
It's this sort of pressure that's caused Riviera once again to hassle with Columbia big wigs over the actual track listing on the new album, having to concede to the deletion of both "Chemistry Class" and "Sunday's Best" — with "Peace, Love And Understanding" slotted in their place as the necessary "obvious choice for single" airplay.

As far as prior Stateside form goes, it's intriguing to note that "This Year's Model" didn't sell as well as "My Aim Is True" ("Aim" by the way holds the record for being the all-time biggest selling 'import' of this decade) due mostly to the lack of that one track that radios can pick up on *en masse* to use to push the album.

In this country, after arduous double-checking, the choice for the new single has settled on "Oliver's Army", although "Forces" has at least four other tracks with equally nagging hook-lines and all round high-grade commercial potential. In its own intimate way "Armed Forces" is Costello's most fervent declaration of intention yet for the title of great '70s pop subversive. The old parallels with Van Morrison, Graham Parker, etc., now seem doubly redundant — the only comparisons even worth making are with The Beatles (the quote from "Abbey Road" is no mere coincidence) and Bowie (again that "Rebel Rebel" coda on "Two Little Hitlers" replete with its stylistic nod to "TVC15" in the vocal inflexions) and they scarcely scratch the surface.

In the current set that Costello and the Attractions are playing around Britain, amid the invigorating versions of "Forces" material and stalwarts like "Chelsea," "Detectives" and "Radio Radio", Costello

■ ***Continues over page***



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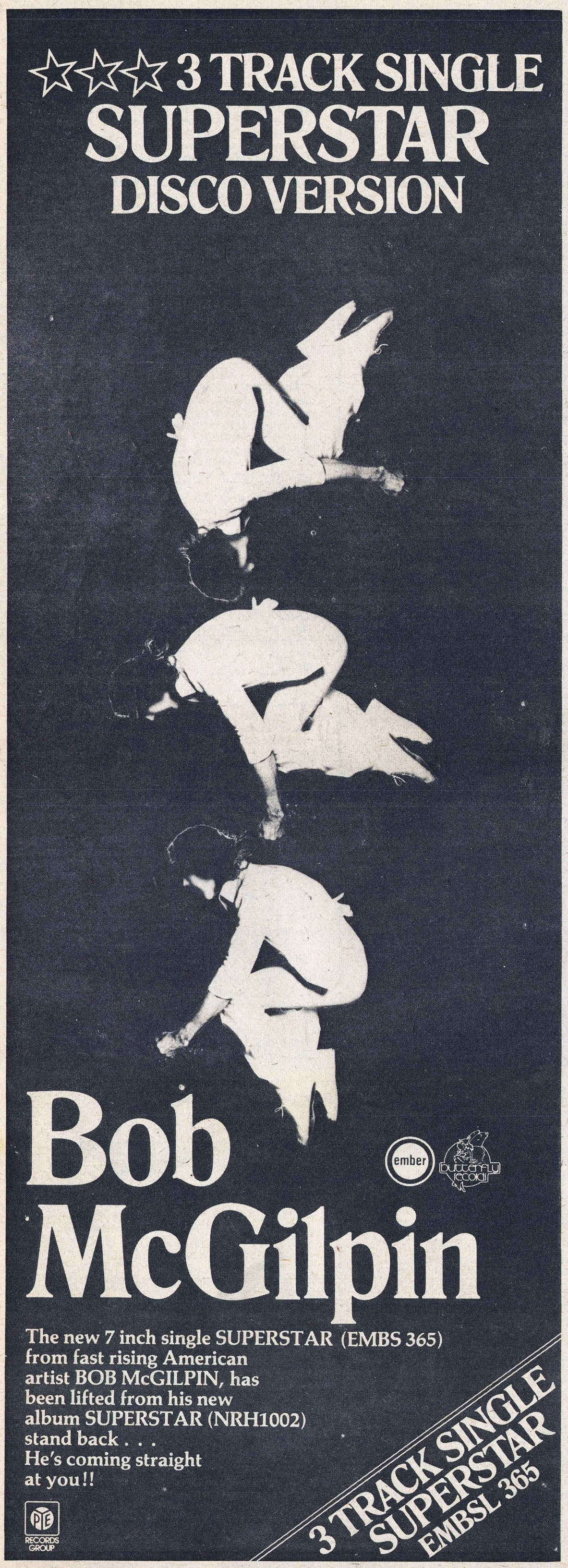

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Watching The Defectives

From previous page

plays a new song entitled "I Stand Accused" (a vintage B-side to a Merseybeats' single) which in many ways eclipses the rest of the set simply because it reminds one again just how exceptional this band is.

THERE was a definite apprehension, a certain fear that the horrendous touring workload of the past year and all the things that go with it might well have deadened much of the spontaneity of the original band at its audacious best. It was a fear confirmed to some extent at the gigs played at the Dominion last Christmas. Where once Costello and his band maintained a constantly inspired attitude, not merely playing the acknowledged classics impeccably but always willing to take a chance, to throw in new songs, new arrangments, new lyrics, etc., they suddenly seemed stilted, tired, more professional but uninspired, as Paul Rambali's review so pertinently stated.

Tonight in Sheffield though, Costello and The Attractions are magnificent and the impromptu rendition of this exquisite piece of beat group fluff marked the real return of the prodigal for me. After that, "Chelsea," "Lipstick Vogue" and "Red Shoes" sounded sparkling. Only "Pump It Up" and "You Belong To Me" seemed lacklustre, just 'going through the motions.' And thereby hangs an irony, as "Pump It Up" was composed as a direct result of Costello's last package tour, when he was the young blood battling it out on the Stiffs live tour alongside Ian Dury, Nick Lowe and Wreckless Eric.

"Pump It Up' was actually the last song I wrote for the 'Model' album and it was conceived very much as a reaction to that tour.

"My feelings about that tour . . . well, it was fun because as far as I was concerned it was principally down to pushing Ian's album. Like every night the encore would be 'Sex And Drugs', right, and Ian knows there's more to it than that, obviously, but it quickly reaches a point where the tour started to take on the manifestations of the song. And like it was getting so ugly I was compelled to write 'Pump It Up' as, you know, well just how much can you fuck, how many drugs can you do before you get so numb you can't really feel anything?

"The Stiff tour was a failure as far as I was concerned. It failed initially because Ian's album didn't immediately take off anyway. On the other hand there was plenty of human chemistry but lots of it was just down to basic negativity. In the last two weeks it can really start to show on certain people's faces.

"It was no great trial for me as such though I did go strange towards the end. I'd like blank out and just see red. It's hard to explain."

The matter of personal compatability on tour was one topic dear to Costello's heart after the Sheffield gig, when he continued to adhere to the party line of no one-to-one interview. In an attempt to compromise the situation, I first of all suggested providing him with a list of several questions to which he could compose a written reply. No, he didn't like that idea much either. He became candid:

"It's not a personal thing against you at all but I honestly don't want to deal with *New Musical Express*. I think the paper has become cheap and offensive (*Oh well, ours never was one of the great romances, Ed.—Ed).* It's like *Rolling Stone* used to be a good paper but it blew it, lost its perspective. I don't like the *NME* much anymore and I particularly don't like some of the things that have been printed about my personal life."

Finally I play my last card, which is simply to get the three tour participants — Costello, Richard Hell, and John Cooper Clark — together and start up what hopefully will become a reasonable dialogue, first about the tour and then on to . . . well, virtually anything. This idea Costello finds surprisingly agreeable and the three duly assemble in the hotel lounge. A preliminary question about the tenuous relationship between the three in terms of each other's notoriety is immediately scuppered by Hell who unfortunately plumps for the easy option: cynicism. Our four-sided discussion begins to turn into a three-against-one, with the question master on the losing side.

It's quickly becoming a pointless escapade.

Three or four false starts later and Hell abruptly leaves the room. This particular shot at human chemistry isn't sparking. I'm forced to shoot trivialities like asking Costello whether he swiped the 'readers wives' reference in "Sunday's Best" from Clarke's opus of the same name.

"No, that's weird actually. I wrote that before I'd even heard of John but. . ."

"But we read the same magazines," chips in Clark with characteristic good humour. Suddenly Clarke disappears, leaving me with Costello — still amenable to talking. Time to aim for the pressing issues. An opening salvo on "Armed Forces" seems appropriate enough. Like, why has Costello relented from calling the album by its initially intended moniker of "Emotional Fascism"?

"Because it became obvious that it was impossible to get away with it. And also because 'Armed Forces' seemed actually more appropriate with its double meaning and all. It was Pete's (Thomas) idea actually."

Just as it seems a dialogue has begun, a finger taps on my shoulder and Costello's lackey PR man peers down and informs me it's time to split. When I counter that I'm happy to spend the night at the hotel the message has to be spelt out: "It would be, uh, *better* if you came with us," he leers. I look at Costello who sits there smiling inscrutably and I realise that I've been set up. The whole thing has been a performance, impeccably acted out with Costello the likely instigator. He'll probably get a song out of it.

And that would be that if it weren't for some revelations on the drive back. Jake Riviera, as always still functioning on enough adrenalin to equip a small field battalion, reveals that Elvis has already composed the whole of his next album while bassist Bruce Thomas reckons the maestro has enough to fill four new albums.

The main vision for the future, however, is that Costello is thinking of breaking into the burgeoning rock film market. I immediately think of a *Don't Look Back* type documentary but Riviera is thinking more of a "real rock film like *Hard Day's Night* or *Help*." In fact the two clips directed by Chuck Slatter (well known for his prior films with the dread Devo) to accompany "Oliver Army" and "Peace Love And Understanding" shamelessly plagiarise/mimic the latter Beatles epic, with The Attractions miming "Oliver" on a desert island et al. A script for the full-scale Costello flick is already written and waiting, Riviera tells me.

"McLaren's movie will knock the whole rock movie thing back two paces," predicts Riviera firmly. "The one that'll do it with any luck will be The Ramones/Roger Corman effort. I mean, we want to make the film to follow up *The Girl Can't Help It.*"

Finally one has to express a certain awe at the sheer immensity of Costello's output. Bruce Thomas, who usually rooms with him when the band tour, confides that Costello is an insomniac who spends the sleepless nights feverishly composing. "He is a workaholic. "The only thing I'm worried about is him having a heart attack at 26. He's driving himself insanely hard."

Sudden flashback to my first Costello encounter. "I'm deadly serious about this. I don't want to be around to witness my artistic decline."

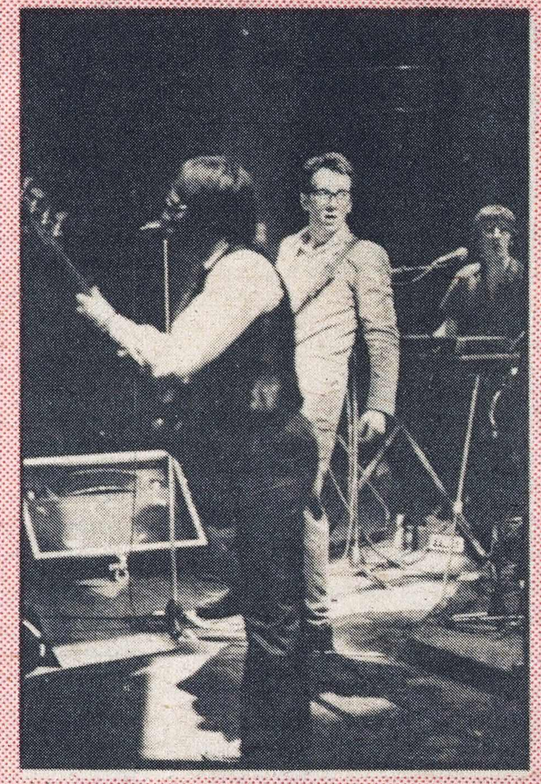
One year later I addressed that same quote to him asking whether success had amended that feeling.

"It's still too close to that. I'm already getting paranoid about what is usually petty bitchiness. Like, someone from England saw me in the States and said something like, 'Oh he's not hungry anymore.' Like I'd lost that edge or something. And it scared me. Sometimes it's just fatigue, other times you can really start to doubt yourself. Sometimes it can be healthy because complete conviction about one's rightness at all times is the worst sort of vanity. Like I've got areas of megalomania which are sometimes the only things that keep me going.

"Sometimes even now I can feel absolutely washed up. If two days go by without an idea for a song I become obsessive about writing. That's what taking it up as a career does as opposed to it merely being a hobby. The thought of me drying up doesn't scare me so much as the thought of me just repeating myself in a series of diminished echoes.

"Watching someone you admired struggling to be inspired is the most pathetic sight imaginable. Ultimately I just want control over what I'm doing.

"Complete control."



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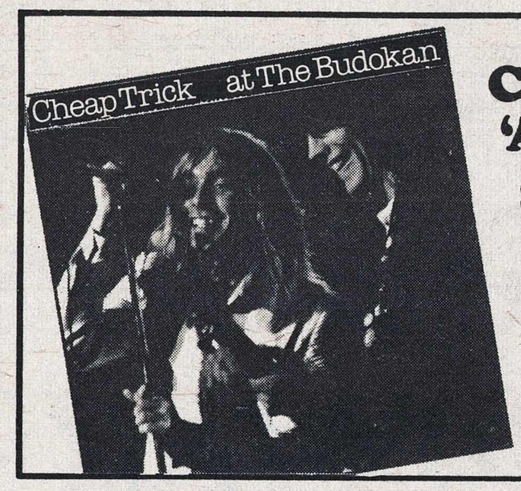

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ALBUMS

After Kevin Coyne, everything else is just toothpaste

KEVIN COYNE
Millionaires And Teddy Bears *(Virgin)*

What is this thing called the curse of Coyne? Why does it topple docile, domesticated rock writers into uncharacteristic tirades against the rock industry and the shameful conceit it's become and probably always was? Why does it compel hardy hacks such as myself to feel guilt-ridden about even being an infinitessimally small part of it all?

Because, from time to time, rock lays claims to having something of a social conscience. In retrospect these claims have a habit of seeming laughably specious, but that doesn't stop some swallowing them hook, line, sinker and fish, even going so far as to predict that rock will encourage a new social climate of concern and commitment.

Thin chance. We forget to remember that the rock machine turns us off, not on, that its only care is to ensure we don't — because if we *did* care, we wouldn't waste time and money strolling up and down the lugubrious gallery that is rock's Great Hall of Fame and Fantasy.

And lo, even as the latest clarion calls for a new and better world are signed, sealed and delivered into oblivion, the rock world reminds itself that business is business after all, that dreams are still the stuff of which more dreams are woven — and reassures supporters and shareholders alike that henceforth any attempts at activism (for which read realism, not misplaced idealism) that jeopardise the supremacy of the dream machine will be firmly discouraged.

Meanwhile Kevin Coyne began writing songs about the silent minority of people whose problems we so casually sweep under the carpet: society's outcasts, derelicts and delinquents. And Coyne's indignation was righteous. He understood intimately what he was writing about. He'd returned to social and psychiatric work after a commercially thankless stab at rock and rhythm and blues with Siren and remained as affronted as ever by the indifference and overt hostility displayed by society and state towards his charges.

His songs were anything and everything, skittling through all hues and shades on the emotional spectrum. They were possessed of a passion and compassion that seemed all the more iconoclastic for being totally isolated from the rock mainstream. Not that Coyne couldn't conceive a pure poprock song; he often did (still does), but they sank unsung, inevitably overshadowed by the more demanding, unsettling qualities of his work.

By rights Kevin Coyne shouldn't need all this special pleading, but things have got so completely out of hand and mouth these last few years that it seems the only way of introducing the man and his words and music. It's not even as if Coyne goes against the accepted grain that, above all else, rock should 'entertain'. His live appearances are certainly nothing if not entertaining (and absorbing, frightening, amusing, depressing, uplifting. . .), his recordings as well.

It's not the form of Coyne's writing that inflames so much animosity; the rock idioms he uses are orthodox enough. It's not his remarkable voice either, a voice capable of chameleon changes as it conveys often conflicting emotions.

No, it's the content of the songs. Only rarely does Coyne feel the need to cock a snook at the rockbiz, preferring to survey the world outside its claustrophobic confines. Which is precisely why his work becomes such an effective critique of the industry's methods and the values (or lack of values) it encourages in its artistes and audiences.

Coyne undoubtedly understands his own predicament. The very nature of his work is totally antipathetic to anything the rock industry can conveniently package, promote and 'produce'. His unswerving, some might say almost heroic, stance isn't even marketably 'outrageous' or outraging. Coyne is a rebel *with* a cause, and all the more discomforting as a result.

He doesn't pretend to lay it (whatever 'it' is) on the line or, indeed, to enact any of the fatuous fantasies that form the larger part of rock's lyrical lexicon. Nor does he feign sensitivity (to call Coyne a singer-songwriter would be insulting, given the lame litanies that crowd under the banner) or poetic pretensions (he has none).

Coyne seems content to run as a rank outsider on the inside for as long as necessary. Although it might well be doing something of a disservice to Coyne to over-emphasise the more negative effects of his work. So, yes, it does expose the rockbiz for being the self-absorbed and sterile exercise in consumer capitalism it is, but Coyne's output is much more positive in other respects.

Rock as escapism and elitism is inevitable given the way of our world but rock as realism and humanism is essential. And this, dear all, is real life. Coyne has always insisted his songs are based on personal experience, and I see no reason not to believe him.

Ouchhh, though, how it hurts sometimes. Damn Coyne for reminding us that quiet desperation and deprivation are for all too many as much the human condition as noisome pleasure and plenty. Who the hell asked him to wake us up?

How it hurts. There are ten songs here, all of them perfectly accessible and profoundly affecting. "Millionaires And Teddy Bears" shadows last year's superlative "Dynamite Daze" in using the same musicians (sadly minus longtime Coyne accompanist pianist Zoot Money) and studios, in sounding just as resolute to roll.

Latterly Coyne seems to have reserved the more alarming confrontations with the emotional extremism that characterised so much of his early work for the stage. Which isn't to suggest he's selling himself short, simply to observe that the main strength and substance of "Millionaires" lies in its plentiful appeals to pathos.

Constipated? *Pic by Pennie Smith*

It's more tea and sympathy, so to speak, than spirits and savagery.

Although the song from which the set takes its title tells a tacky tale; "Having A Party" thumps and bumps to a behemoth of a big drum figure, a grotesque, doubtless deliberate travesty of a disco-track for hearts of stone. Co-producer (with Coyne) Bob Ward's liquefied electric guitars squirt and squirm against the beat like the body sacs of beetles underboot.

"Spot the millionaires / aristocrats / big teddy bears / fools in fools hats", chivvies the chorus, all riffed up with somewhere to go. Coyne's at a party and none too taken with what he sees and hears — hardly surprising those same millionaires are *"Discussing my future / I wonder why they tell me I'd be much better if I told one little lie, / smoke up the chimney / bones of pop-stars / they say you've got to be tough / and rough and tough and rough / if you want to be a pop-star"*.

Can't help but wonder just who the joke's on. Later, in a "boogie-one" nightmare, Coyne has to confess to some biz buffoon that no, he hasn't got a single gold disc at all. And the buffoon freaks: *"Get back get back / Don't want you here. . ."*

A song that gives no credit or quarter where none is due.

And that's our lot for vitriol and vituperation this time round. "Let Me Be With You" and "I'll Go Too" ride on the cutting edge of combined acoustic and electric playing that Coyne's current studio band are so good at sharpening. The first contrasts present domesticity with past lust and tails off asking *"What on earth is my mind going to do. . .with memories of you?"* The second tracks further back, but reconciles adolescence with adulthood: *"I had a vision of this in 1955 (and it's coming true)"*. Lost love, found love. Just like it is.

Side two includes a painfully expressive quartet of songs, painful because they're so utterly uncontrived. "Marigold" mumbles and bumbles about an old girlfriend and her daydreams of dominion over men, ends with a touching stream of conversational Coynese *". . .she said she knew that anyway most of what I said I'd got out of books and I didn't know what she was doing and that women were about to take over the world. . ."*

As near as Coyne gets to a torch ballad, "Mandy's Dream" rebukes an old flame's current with sobering sincerity, *"Don't blame Mandy. . .Behind her face you can see the pain / She has a brain / She has a mind / Something of her own / Don't be kind. . .Be true — Be right — Leave her tonight — Let her fly — Don't make her cry / . . .Don't blame Mandy / Blame me"*. Note also, here and elsewhere, Paul Wickens' keyboards, easily the match and measure of Al Kooper or Garth Hudson for careful, controlled omnipresence and emoting.

"Little Miss Portobello" struts and strums, bounding on Al James' bass, handing wholesome advice to a country girl lost in the city: *"Go home, go home. . ."*

But "Wendy's Dream" is the most powerful of the four. Based on a folkish motif, it recalls an affair with a girl whose heart beats elsewhere (back in rural Ireland), an affair that has to confront the rigours of city life to survive at all. And it does. Just.

Over on side one, "I'm Just A Man", musically serenely simple, sees Coyne clamber to unprecedented heights. A rambling (don't we all at awkward amorous moments?) declaration of intent, it manages to stem the flow of inane puerilities that pass for rock love songs at a single stroke.

Coyne doesn't have to hang up a sign that says "Warning — Sensitive Soul At Work", doesn't have to resort to prick-proud paeans of dominance and submission, just sings: *"And if I sound a little confused it's because / I'm all feeling for you — Can you understand? / Mmmm well it's not that I want to say it'll last forever / and that we'll be in that never-never land / where things always go right / because in my experience the light can turn a little dark / . . .and it's not that I want to say I've got a solution / 'cus I don't have a solution / and sometimes don't have a notion / as to whether I mean what I say (but I mean it now), yes I mean it now. . ."*

Can you feel it? Of course you can. Which leaves "Pretty Park", a snappy, self-explanatory shuffle of a summer scene, "People", the opener and appropriately enough a calling-on song, Coyne's voice resounding over viscous guitars, and "The World Is Full Of Fools", the closer co-written with Ward, reminiscent of Procol Harum's "Salty Dog" period in its understated grandeur and resonating long after with its chorus couplets, *"Yes, the world is full of fools / But it doesn't make them bad people"*.

Anyone who has a heart — and we all do, all we have to do is let it beat — could never accuse Coyne of fruitless or fatuous self-absorption. His greatest gift, it seems, lies in his ability to communicate what's often private and painful without sham or shame; a process that's sometimes as necessarily effortful for his audience as it must be for him. The gulf that separates Coyne's rigorous realism from, say, the equally well-intentioned but ultimately self-defeating writhings of a Peter Hammill should be obvious to one and all; Hammill rarely credits the characters in his songs with life of their own, whereas Coyne invariably does.

D.H. Lawrence used to castigate modern man for losing any sense of wonder at the everyday world; he might perhaps have found a kindred spirit in Kevin Coyne, who examines and exalts the everyday and commonplace principally because it *should* be exalted as when all's said and done, it's all most of us have got. Whatever your resident rock and role doctor may advise, there's really little sense in scuttling off to search for stimulation elsewhere since, if we can't cope with reality, we're unlikely to be able to cope with anything at all.

Kevin Coyne's aim is very true. Roll over and tell everybody the news.

Angus MacKinnon

Two sides of Coyne: contemplative. . . *Pic by Pennie Smith*

Breezy Brighton?

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Vaultage '78 (Two Sides of Brighton) ***(Attrix)***

Some fuss has been made for this sampler of seven (inside sleeve) or eight (outer) amateur-ish young rock groups from the Brighton area — most of it coming from those who favour anti-intellectualisation and will tell you that a Good Tune in '76 is still a Good Tune if it comes out of the closet in '79.

I will gladly cheer any collective who decide to circumvent the evil empire of large record companies and make their own, with a view to encouraging others in a similar direction. Only. . .

The music is as much the point of the practice as being an 'alternative'; the music should provide alternatives — not necessarily *marketable* ones — 'cos if the music fails there's a good chance the 'message' might as well.

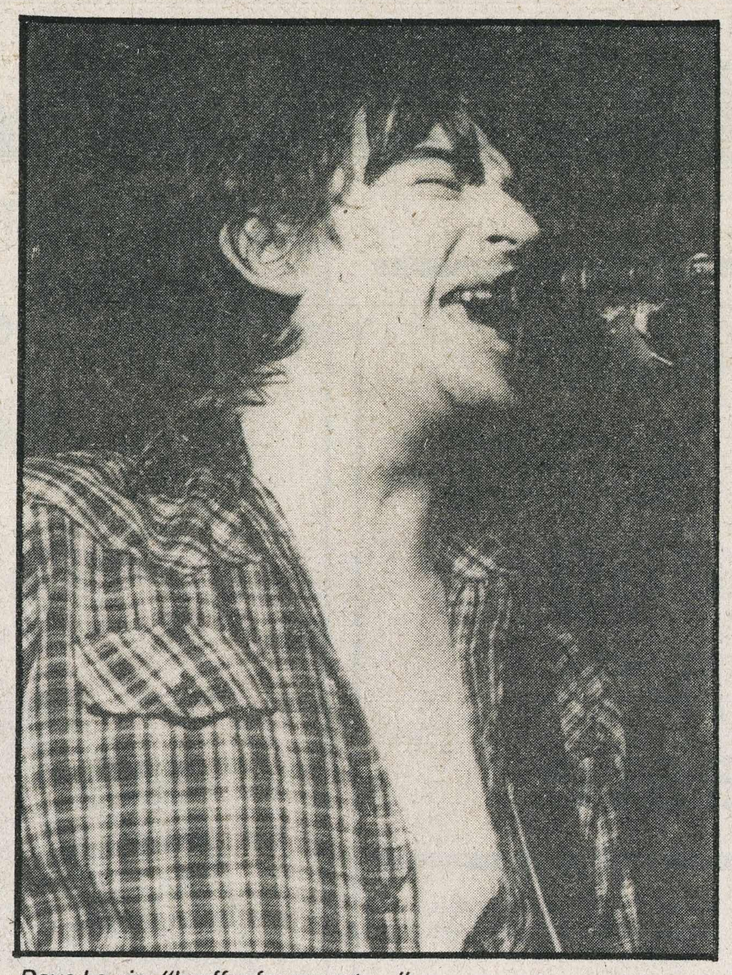
The music on "Vaultage '78" is without fail sickly and stinky, being of that "I Don't Care/I Don't Want/I Hate/I'm Bored/I'm Gormless" 1976 variety — hopeless and useless, really, about as in tune with the present as Here and Now: then and there.

If something's worth doing it's worth doing badly. . .

Now, for myself, I would agree if you should protest about a national music paper which gives hyped-up, empty and harmful street — sic — music from either side of the channel (the missing link between Gen X and French rock?) an easy passage, only to swipe away at an undertaking such as "Vaultage '78", which at least is DIY, plucky, and perhaps something that might inspire other young people to do something creative in the beat music sphere.

It's more than worth attempting — but it's worth much more if you can beat the crass city rockers at their own game. Although I loathe the collection of pirhanas and Test Tube Babies and the like on "Vaultage '78", I would certainly rather pay £2.00 for the info on the sleeve — "The complete cost of this album including recording costs was in the region of £950 for a pressing of 1000 records" — than an extortionate amount of moneys for the latest Jean, Jacques or Billy egocomforter.

Ian Penman



Dave Lewis: "I suffer for my art. . ."

DAVE LEWIS
A Collection Of Short Dreams ***(Polydor)***

Glance at the album's whimsical title, and foppish cover shot of Lewis gazing afar in sultry manner, and know the man's sense of direction has taken a sharp decline.

Muse through the lyric sheet, and find it awash with seamless sentiment; diluted romantic parables that alternate hope/despair/irrelevance.

Spin it and see the lure of studio production dissipate a once supremely raw live sound into over-detailed, soft-focus monotone, at times even enlisting an angelic chorus backup.

And worse, see it repress a highly proficient crew of session men by allowing the vocal a near-total monopoly, with solos kept minimal, arrangements kept strictly orthodox.

If anything, the Lewis brand of slickish Americana funk lends itself to extensive instrumental, to limitless rhythm interchange, to dance music. To hear it relegated, in two half-decent tracks and seven duff ones, to mere slumberdown padding for his 'short dreams', makes for a soporific and severely disappointing album.

Maybe next time he'll crack it.

Mark Ellen

AIRWAVES
New Day ***(Mercury)***

Rockfield isn't just a studio, it's a way of laugh. Full of loonies, stray cats and folk who tote assorted veg of elephantine proportions, the Monmouth venue has established itself not only as a home of hits, but also as a starting point for many unlikely but ultimately worthy ventures.

Such, to some degree, is "New Day" by Airwaves, a band formed by bassist John David, once of Love Sculpture, Ray Martinez, a multi-instrumentalist who formerly chugged around with such bands as Spring and Gypsy before returning to studio chores at the Wye Valley funhouse, and Dave Charles, ex-Iceberg and Help Yourself drummer, who along with Pat Moran (producer of "New Day"), has been a Rockfield producer for many a Michaelmas.

Several of the cuts on the album have appeared here as UA singles, while the album itself has been available in the US on the A&M label for several months. Now, in best loony Rockfield manner, "New Day" has made its appearance on British Mercury, an event which should throw discographies into confusion for yonks to come.

What of the music then? Well, that's pop. High grade, immaculately crafted pop. The sort that you wouldn't be ashamed of taking home to mother, assuming that mother happened to be maybe a 10cc fan. For Airwaves have a lot in common with those cubic confectioners — though there's nothing tricksy about David's and Martinez's home-brewed songs, these being in the art for charts sake category, good, easy-to-live-with love songs of the kind termed "silly" by Bagpipes McCartney.

But like 10cc, the studio expertise employed is ace-high, the harmony vocals and instrumental work being slick but not sickening, clean but not cloying and bright but not brittle.

In short this is Radio One music of the best kind. Don't sneer. Cheer.

Fred Dellar

HERE & NOW
Give And Take ***(Charly)***

Successive attempts at a measured, respectful critique of this garish, squelchy prune of a social science soundtrack have had me floundering. I can't get past the past which goes into opening an album with *"Twinkle twinkle little star / What you see is what you are"* and goes on from that.

From the corny, clotted 'concrete' name — Canterbury existentialists take the blame — Here & Now follow a predictably fey line; they're approachable in theory but are a hiveful of skunks in practice, know what I mean?

What they think and what they sing is potentially subversive, and free gigs and cheap records are fine, even if they didn't actually make the record (or the synthesiser) themselves. But this music is going to bring Babylon to its knees like *Blue Peter* is going to canvas the SWP.

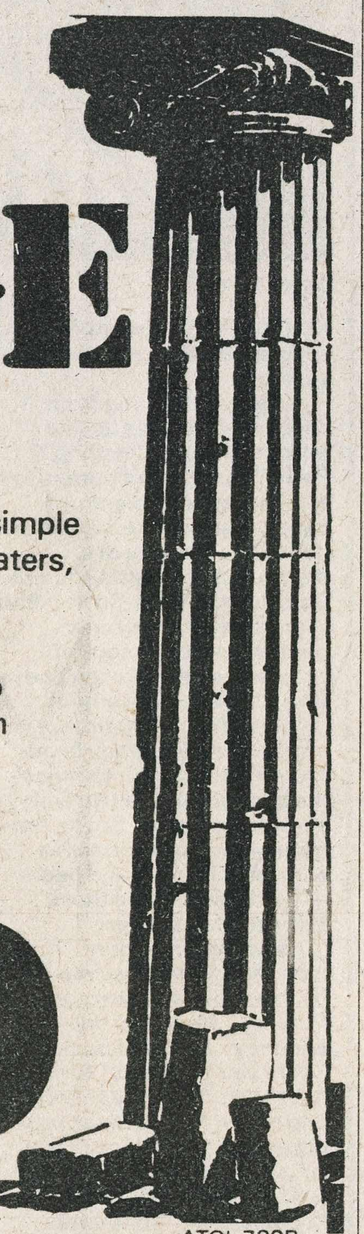
Here & Now can be easily, immediately classified, thus assimilated, thus neutered! happy hippies, idles with idylls, chugging round the campus circumference playing "Floating (sic) Anarchy" *petit-bourgeois* drop-out games which challenge standard aesthetic-politic practices not a lot at all.

Same old squeeky, mouldy motifs, structures, hacky dualisms (give and take, war and peace, nature and technology etc), whacky names, coaches, roaches, afghan coats, goats ... what you see is what you are?

No, man, *you're* the idealistic drip! I'm for a few poison umbrellas in high places myself.

Ian Penman

GREEK VILLAGE



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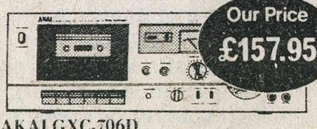

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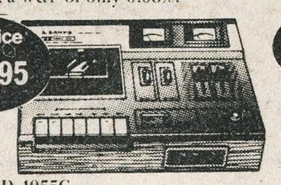

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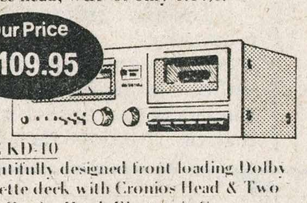

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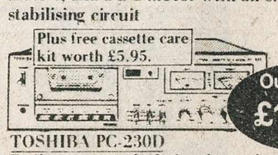

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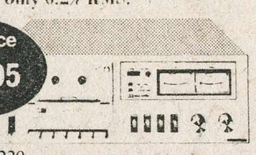

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MABRAK
Drum Talk
(Different Records)

The sleeve shows an eight-piece band: one trumpeter and seven men tapping away on bongoes, perhaps a suggestion of a serious evening of tribal music down the Commonwealth Institute.

Fortunately, Mabrak's reggae isn't quite that po-faced and ethnic, but it is a bit drum-heavy.

Drum-and-bass may be the cornerstone of dub, but this is more like drumanddrum anddrumand bass music. The only variety comes from an irritating voice which comments throughout in the approved street-talking style.

Dubbing is a tricky art, and at least this album doesn't offer the simplistic electronic tomfoolery on which most contemporary dub albums rely. Still, to keep our interest, the original rhythms must have a quality of their own, and that's where the album falls short. "Liquid Talk" is a version of Harry J's old "Liquidator" hit, while "Late Late Talk" dubs up Carole King's "It's Too Late Baby", the reggae popularity of which has always seemed a bit misplaced to me.

The rest are fairly pleasant tunes which fade into the wallpaper as soon as you lift the stylus. I don't know who Mabrak are: the sleeve and press handout don't offer any information except that The Abyssinians rate this album highly; as they have an album on Different too, I don't know how seriously to take that.

Anyway, it hardly matters. For all their serious efforts to do something a little way different, Marak have given us just another dub album, neither good or bad, and not even the mixing from King Tubby will make me want to hear it again.

Nick Kimberley

Various Artists
Nova Vaga *(Warm Records)*

Here we have it at last — the first compilation album from the Warm Records stable!

Nova Vaga? somewhat of an unusual title you might think — not so. The brothers Castrovsky found it pointing the way to the beach and it literally means New Wave in Portuguese!

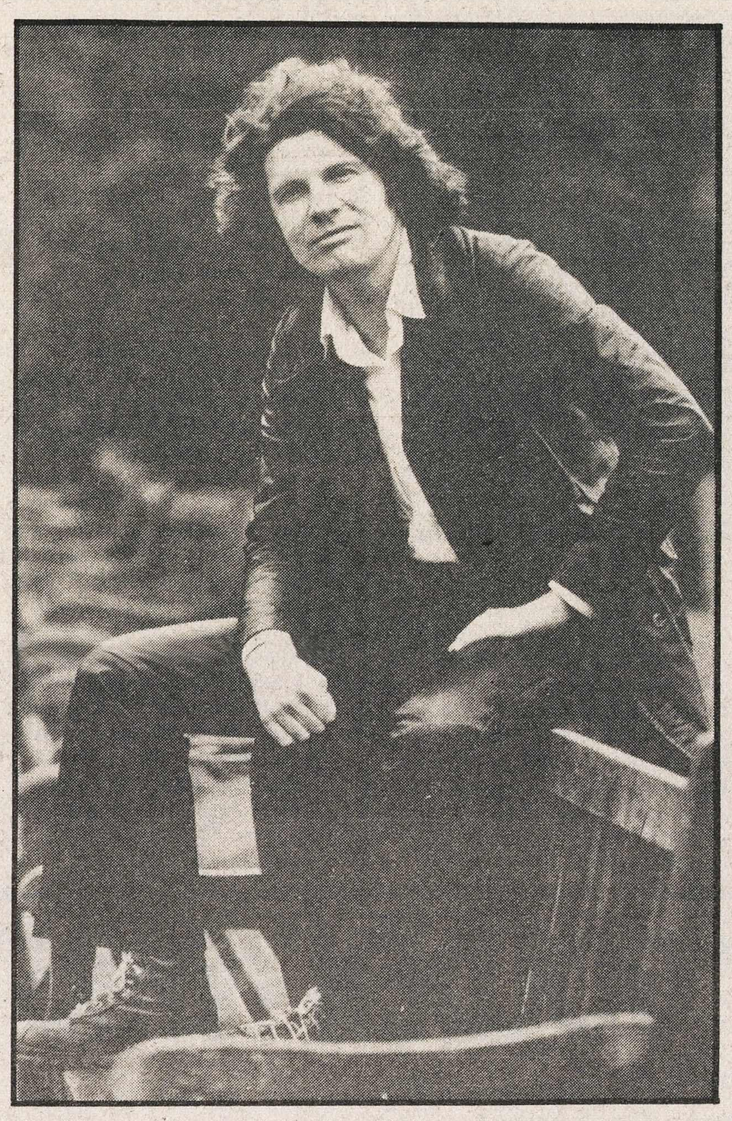
"Nova Vaga" is a mixture of New Wave music activists from very diverse and interesting origins. The Warm Group arrive with four of their own compositions and one from Peter Tosh and one from The Ramones. Nobody does it quite like The Warm — you've got to listen to find out!

And there are five new groups from the Warm label. "Hot Rod Gino" comes from fast-talking and hard-rocking Godfrey Tollman's group, The Fred Banana Combo, an Anglo-German combination. Tracks two and three feature Alan Libert's Paranoia, a New York-based band. A lot of talent here! Classics student Libert plays a myriad of unusual instruments and his two numbers don't go that far, but just far enough to be great rocking numbers — look out for stronger stuff in the future!

Tracks four and five are by The Beat Brothers. Their music says it all — how about a rooty tooty bop or some robot dancing, eh? Track six is from Wendy — ex of the Mirror Boys and Cheap And Nasty. This girl's got a track record and lyric appeal. Now she's getting together her new London-based band, so look out for her on the gig circuit. Right? Track seven is from The Exile, a Scottish group from Glasgow.

All in all, quite an album!!!

Ian Penman



Rod Argent: ". . . . and you'll suffer for mine."

ROD ARGENT
Moving House *(MCA)*

Dexterous keyboard player Rod Argent has spent the last 15 years or so flogging round the world with his rock bands to limited avail. Now he's decided to attempt a solo shot at the platinum league, and come up with an album that will doubtless be well received by his fellow musicians. Though perhaps less well by the rest of us.

Argent has eschewed the Rick Wakeman path to the mega-buck. Ponderous pseudo-symphonies with riffs inspired by Elmer Bernstein are clearly not his style.

Rather he's opted to present himself as singer-songwriter, using the keyboards for decorous embellishments en route. Sometimes this works. Mostly he goes in for the sort of songs that virtually require a Ph.D. in music to sing. Short on melody, long on verbal contortions.

On occasion, though, he's there with the easier sort of tune that non-specialists can come to terms with. The opener "Home" is an amiable little ballad that should help shift the units. "Smiling", the final song, is a grand Latin American anthem to rouse the insensitive. Evita evinced.

Essentially, Argent has to choose between pleasing his well-heeled fusioneer friends — among them Phil Collins, here on drums — or giving the ears of the lower orders a little of what they fancy.

Bob Edmands

Basement Bargain?

THE REGGIE KNIGHTON BAND
The Reggie Knighton Band *(CBS Import)*

The first Reggie Knighton album ended up in the American bargain bins six months after release. Strange really, because Knighton is a ready-made practitioner of that brand of USA chromatic pop whose sensibilities, to all intents, stopped quite successfully around the time of "Rubber Soul".

But where Tom Petty has gone on to garner his rightful rewards and the heroic Dwight Twilley has suffered the indignity of becoming a cult figure and the subject of a totally unwarranted backlash in roughly the same week, young Reg remains a complete enigma. Knighton's strength lies in his material's duality, and various interpretations match the scope of his warped insights.

The essence of the Reggie Knighton Band is high camp. The leader looks like a clone, his boys ooze a complimentary and highly dubious sexuality, and the whole is reminiscent of a cast of mutated humanity in the Udo Kier mould. With this second album it becomes impossible to divine where pastiche begins and originality ends. The same lyrical obsessions — hard drugs, guns, silly science fiction personae and an overwhelmingly anti-female bent — are here again, albeit in a slightly more accessible format.

Knighton is a great pretender with a fine, warped wit. Becker and Fagen couldn't better the manic nastiness of "The King And I" or "Highway Patrol". He nods a substantial debt to The Byrds ("Lear Jet"), but his aspirations are purely futuristic, technological psychedelia, the chord structures often recalling vintage John Lennon.

I guess that I like Knighton most for his irreverent alternatives, all of them wicked fantasies, all of them gratuitously sick, materialist, depressing. In spite of the initial tone he maintains a personality and a developed sense of humour which ought to have made him a deal more popular thus far. "Ooh Girl" is simply the best woman exploitation number of the year; the sheer hate that gets twisted into Knighton's backhanded compliments makes The Stranglers come over like *Spare Rib* columnists. Underneath it all this record is guaranteed entertainment. Last year witnessed the birth of many alien causes — this is one of the cleverest.

Max Bell

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Livvy Doll

Livvy hams it up for Kevin Cummins' camera

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN
Totally Hot
(EMI)

Olivia, the minx, could sell a *Measure Your Own I.Q.* bookette to Vanessa Redgrave, and without effort semi-sells me on every damned detached gesture she does. I just refer (sentimental fool) to the money she gave the dolphins and — high nooning it onto rockanroll myth-image territory — I see that poster-moment in the last reel of *Grease* when she shifted out of that leather jacket. That's an electronicGodzillasnap alongside Iggy Pop walking on hands, or John Travolta likes jailbait.

Sex-power that clean and photogenic deserves *some* measure of drooled excuse for sub-sequent-standard product; still, I say that Olivia is a greedy girl to continue putting out soppy, uninteresting records when she could be cleaning up (and I don't mean finding bras and lolly-sticks in the aisles) at any cinema in the civilised world.

You are a film star and a fine actress, Olivia, no matter what the old man critics say. They say you were wet and drippy in *Grease;* they seem to have overlooked the fact that you were playing a wet and drippy caricature girl. How did they expect a cheerleader to act — smoking a cheroot and cutting balls off with her tongue? What's *their* idea of a "good" actress? Old Diane Keaton, who plays wet and drippy meant-to-be-realistic people? You are Nik Cohn's brash blonde Hollywood and Diane Keaton is a critic's meaningful art-film, and we all know which one of you becomes a counter-culture and playground icon.

But I advised Olivia some months ago to never utter an octave without John again. Singing with him, or getting her skintight image on dreamuloid, she's the only girl in the world to the next generation (I read the pop dailies, and all the eight-year-olds want to be *her* now instead of a nurse). Singing alone, Olivia is immediately, horribly — no matter how much black she puts around her eyes and body — that nice girl who used to share a lemonade with The Shadows. I wince when I hear my parents refer to your past, Livvy, I really do.

She's all face and hair and walk and not much else; her voice is sweet but incidental. This album is her umpteenth in a long line of voids, and the content stays much the same though the form alters itself considerably, from clean-cut English pastel girlfriend to mature American beige mistress. She sings songs of yearning, being hurt or satisfied or frustrated in her uninteresting voice to a slow or fast rhythm section aided by a wailing, hypocritical "rock" guitar. Expert U.S. musicians, egged on by a useless *Aphex Aural Exciter;* not a mistake do they make, not a note do they miss, not a heart do they warm.

Included are hit naughty-piece single "A Little More Love" and an awful 'cover' of "Gimme Some Lovin' " (disgusting title) wherein Liv attempts funk and fervour and sounds sick as ever of singing. She also writes two of the songs, as good as those her career-men songwriters write. Muted, tutored; even when she tries to sound sinful her years of being sincere stifle her histrionics.

Singles-bar folk-music, I *suppose* . . . not for the *Grease*'ers, those bright infants, but for sad, bold bachelors and their Miss Adequates; searching, as in going to the bar and sitting on your stool, music. Me too, I went searching for the scent of my admiration (or at least a tune) and instead found a girl capable of giant-killing just killing time on redundant vinyl. Actually, it's the kind of record Diane Keaton will most likely inflict on the American album charts if she ever gets around to cutting those songs Bob Dylan wrote for her — tasteful, dealing with broken/struggling relationships, mature, boring, other-womanish, yeuchhh.

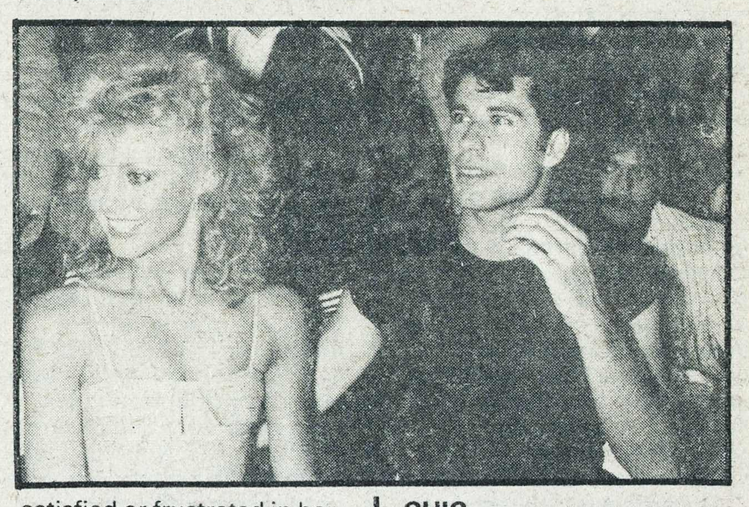
I don't think Olivia Newton-John is a god or a good singer; I just think every decade seems to desire a big screen blonde whose name has also been heard by every kitchen-sink (this is where Debbie Harry gets let out with the dish-water) in England and America. Late though she is, Olivia is the '70s one who could well be the '80s one too, just because the boys who love her and the girls who would love to be her are so *tiny.*

"No is a word I can't say . . ." You should learn to say it loud and often, superstar, and become a millionaire legend (but please keep on looking after the dolphins). You can be as tacky and tarty as you want on your album sleeves and it won't help or harm you anymore — you're famous to your new, important record-buyers through your film, and the purity and the tease is all part of your acting career to them. You really should get on with it.

Film is the word, is the world, is her world . . .

Julie Burchill

Below:
Livvy and John share an old-fashioned look
John: "So that's you when you're a singer, huh?"
Liv: "Yep — quite a hep chick, eh?
John: "Er, best stick to the screen dream, kid."
Pic by BRAD ELTERMAN, LFI.



CHIC
Tres Chic *(Atlantic)*

Favourable reviews of disco records tend to draw butch parallels with rock music. For example: Sylvester is a Quentin, but his drummer is a real navvy.

Given criteria of that sort, Chic just don't rate. Most of the time their rhythm section aren't contenders in the dance-hall machismo stakes. In fact, Chic are very well named. Even "Tres Chic" is accurate. The basic quality on display here is finesse. Arrangers Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers offer a slick, sophisticated approach, combined with a finely honed sense of what constitutes memorable pop.

This is practically a greatest hits set without really trying. Three cuts have already made the charts — "Le Freak", "Everybody Dance", and "Dance, Dance, Dance".

The evidence is that others could make it, too. "I Want Your Love" and "Happy Man" have cute little choruses and readily memorable melodies.

High-grade classy bubble-gum, with the disco beat as a welcome extra.

Bob Edmands

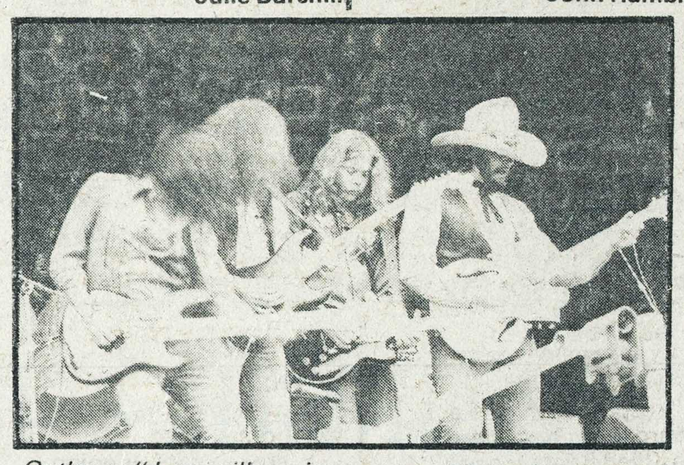
OUTLAWS
Playin' To Win *(Arista)*

Another Kentucky Fried Turkey from the Great American Yawn. A depressingly typical slab of pretentious Americana: cringingly inadequate attempts at melody, pointlessly misplaced rhythm changes, an album held together by guitar solos and cheap production stunts.

The Outlaws have none of the tingly voodoo panache of, say, Steppenwolf; neither have they the hysterical overkill humour of a Kiss; they aren't even as pretty as Aerosmith — in fact, The Outlaws haven't got much going for them at all. And as if the obvious, visible flaws aren't enough (and, believe me, they should be), this ramshackle bunch of would-be Eagles insist on throwing out creepy toadyisms like *"We're just the players, you are the show,"* or, even worse, *"Take is anyway yo want it, be your own superstar."* Even The Clash don't say things like that anymore.

If you feel compelled to buy a rock'n'roll album this week, my advice is forget the sandwiches and salad, go straight for the steak and potatoes. Try AC/DC's live album; it's a barrel of laughs.

John Hamblett



Outlaws: "Jeez, will ya give a guy some gee-tar room . . .?" Pic by Pennie Smith.

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NME

The Mincer

Instant Karma for cold turkeys. This week's hit man: TONY PARSONS

CLOUT
Substitute *(Carrere)*
With their strident submission in overdrive and brains racing in neutral, saucy South African sheilas Clout attempt to pass themselves off as fillers on a mid-period Abba album. It's all here — heavily accented pidgin hot-panting, our-hotel-is-HERE Benidorm acousticisms, a blanched Clarence Clemons on skis and interminable love, honour and grovel.

Dispensing quickly with the social comment (the catty "Where Are You Going, Ms America?") and bid for credibility ("Let It Grow") the floor is cleared for "Feel My Need", "You Make My World So Colourful" (chuckles), "Don't Stop", "Substitute", "Save Me" (wot, no "Spit On Me"?) clot-heads playing the part of sperm receptacles at the other end of a Rod Stewart, Tom Jones or Bob Dylan song.

Debbie Harry does it all so much better.

PETER STRAKER
Changeling *(EMI)*
You could almost believe 1979 is the year of Jobriath . . . From the rake on the sleeve stripped bare and posing like some *Ambre Solaire* mutt to the smoked ham-fisted Queen-being-classical portentous plodding to the maudlin autobiographical depository *("So move over, dears, make way for this old tart/you ain't seen a thing/I've got the art/Ha! Ha! Ha!"* being a particular favourite of mine).

Sounds like Johnny Cougar if he'd been influenced by Mercury instead of Springsteen, and there are also echoes of sundry Bowie travesties. Peter Straker could have been the fruit on the hat of Carmen Miranda. He thinks he's really weird.

THE TYMES
Cameo-Parkway Sessions *(London)*
Those of us who first bumped into The Tymes circa the seminal '70s ("Trustmaker", "Mis Grace") and only later perused their earliest recordings expecting an XX Chromosome Orlons came to wish we'd stuck with our collection of Ink Spots 78s. Hard to believe this stuff is over 15 years old. It still sounds as dated as ever.

THE COUNT
I'm A Star *(Flamingo)*
At his very best The Count erupts into a brand of pusy brilliance not noted since The Afrika Korps' "Music To Kill By". Par for the course, however, is Tom Verlaine singing Lou Reed.

The Count's tremulous *angst* is absolutely *identical* to that of Thomas's lilting larynx.

Off-the-wall axe heroics battle it out with concise chopper riffing; ambiguous poesy faces off to quaintly sinister chanted commands.

His kindest critics will be those who have a soft spot for even the worst moments of the Akron compilation.

ZWOL
Zwol *(EMI)*
Reading Zwol's press release ("from the street and for the street, ahead of punk by miles") you might believe this chromedome colonial possessed all the inner city suss of Hilda Ogden slouched against a South Bronx fire hydrant.

But a cursory lughole-full of doe-eyed Andrew Gold-meets-George Hatcher reveals him to be as close to the street as Willy De Ville's earrings.

He croons for an everlasting heart of gold and in the next breath bellows for an immediate blow-job. He breathes rude words with more senstitivity than I've ever heard in my life. He goes, *"Boooolsheeet"*. Confused, confusing.

TERI DE SARIO
Pleasure Train *(Pye)*
Disco for helium addicts — a Gibbland production, so it sure ain't brudder Baz who's the brains behind the Rothschilds of rock's Wall Street, shuffling. This resembles the time Polly Brown blacked up for *TOTP*. Lightweight, frothy, floating. Rumour has it Teri can't step outdoors without numerous sand bags secured to her scoopneck chiffon number.

ALLAN CLARKE
I Wasn't Born Yesterday *(Aura)*
Ex-Holly Clarkers has a chance to get his own back for not being asked to accompany Graham to the lush pastures of Crosby and Co, and falls flat on his Anne Murray bubble-cut. He wants to be a clean-cut Neil Young, decked out by Take Six. He wants to be meaningful, important. Hear the orchestra!

FREDDIE "FINGERS" LEE
Freddie "Fingers" Lee *(Charly)*
Oh, that drawling downhome good ol' bwoy committing BH on his long-suffering boogie-woogie piano, that controlled, cocky swagger, those roots — the juke box in some colored joint and the sounds on the local C&W radio station . . . it could only be the Louisiana Fireball, Jerry Lee Lewis, and some previously undiscovered Sun studio outtakes from about 1957!

WRONG!!

This faultless facsimile was recorded in Holland last year. And Fred's from Newcastle (well, it would probably sound quite glamourous if you wuz some dumb cracker from south of the Mason-Dixie line).

CHAMPION
Champion *(CBS)*
If I wanted blue-eyed, black-hearted, white-boy R&B that's a direct cop from Graham Parker, I'd be listening to Van Morrison. Or Thin Lizzy. Or Elvis. Or Tom Robinson. That plagiarist Morrison don't care *who* he rips off.

LOUDSPEAKERS
Loudspeakers *(Ebony)*
Heads down, no nonsense mindless butch creatures who make dangerous dudes Lynyrd Skynyrd look like Walter Becker and Donald Fagan. In the less civilised outbacks of the Mid West, Loudspeakers can be nothing else than mammoth.

STEPPIN' OUT
Steppin' Out *(Charly)*
European honkies whose mission is to bring the rhythms of JA to the members of the EEC. Although its devastating to find they've omitted their classic "My Kind Of Town (Trenchtown Is)", it has to be said that they are as fundamentally vital to reggae as Bob Marley's "Ain't Nothing But A Punky Reggae Party (Dr Feelgood Will Be There)" was to the evolution of rock music.

The missing link between China Street, PIL, Judge Dread, "White Man In The Hammersmith Palais", Rock Against Racism, "Dreadlock Holiday" and Tapper Zukie's psychic grip on Patti Smith.

Tony Parsons

Imports

I guess there might be a couple of people in the world who won't be offended in some way by **David Peel's** "King Of Punk" (Orange). But then, that's only a guess. "Fuck You, Patti Smith", the ex-banana muncher proclaims on the self-promoting anthem that lends the album its name, while Talking Heads, The Shirts, New York Dolls, Tuff, Darts, CBGBs, The Sex Pistols and even the inoffensive Milk'n'Cookies figure among those similarly reviled.

Christians get it right in the neck on track one where Peel and Death, a band drawn from a pool of some two dozen listed singers and musicians (though they may be all playing at once for all I know — the recording quality is *that* bad) indulge in a kind of black mass, while the police and the CIA — those long-term friends of those seeking easy targets on which to heap invective — once more hear it from diatribe alley via "He's Called A Cop" and "The Master Race" respectively. Add a wayward little chant called "Who Killed Brian Jones?" which asks "Was it one of the Rolling Stones?", toss in a little charmer known as "Murder Burgers", which deals with an updated Sweeney Todd situation, then flavour lightly with a ditty that consists entirely of the line "A mother, mother fuck", and you'll realise that Peel is not New York's answer to John Denver.

Behind it all, the band generally provide a sound that roughly equates that of the Stones multi-dubbed from here to eternity — that's to say, things get a little blurred around the edges — while the sleeve is as home-made as any likely to emanate from the lower reaches of Bootslegsville, the liner notes crediting Peel as Record Producer, Master Tape Editor, Mixdown Engineer, Recording Engineer, Cover Layout and Cover Concept Man, plus Art Director, the inner sheet comprising a photocopied (and personally signed) pic of Peel sharing mike-time with that well-known sack-race team John and Yoko. All-in-all, I ought to hate it. But I don't.

Next week I get psycho-analysed.

There's a rumour going around that ownership of the **Dylan** "Budokan" double is a really prestige-grabbing deal. But don't be fooled, the final clincher in the impress-your-friends-and-horrify-your-bank-manager market is possession of the boxed International Artists Limited Edition.

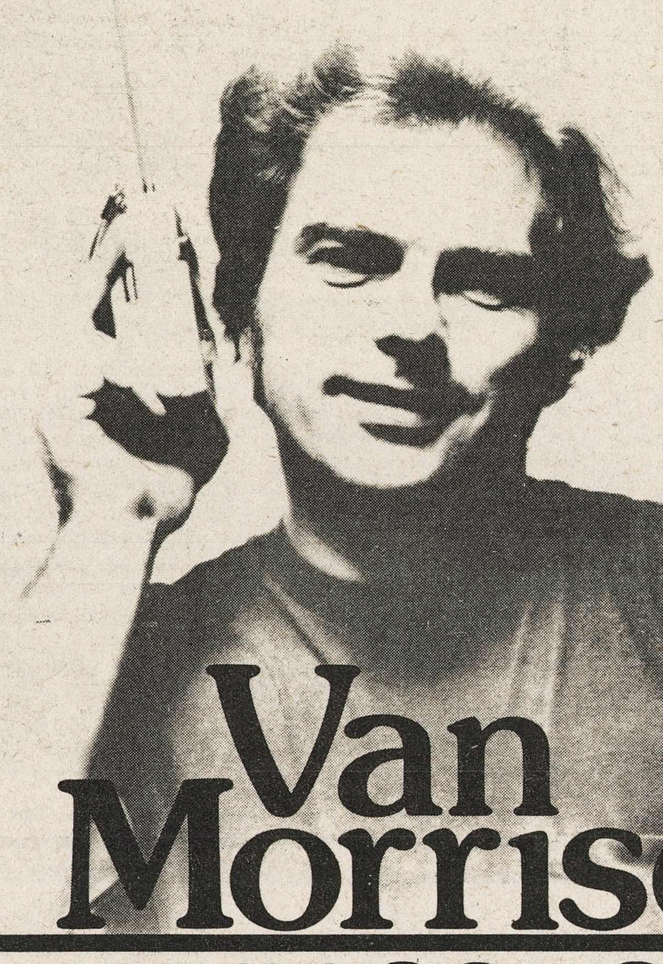
A limited edition set comprising all 12 albums released on Lelan Rogers' IA label — these being **13th Floor Elevators, Red Crayola, Lost And Found, Golden Dawn, Lightnin' Hopkins, Bubble Puppy, Endle St. Cloud** and bluesman **Dave Allen** — is currently retailing at HMC's London store for just £108!

Meanwhile, those pic-discs continue to proliferate like bootleggers at a Dylan gig, the latest arrivals including **The Who's** "Who Are You" (MCA), **Rodnee's** "Blondes Have More Fun (Warner), **Bob Seger's** "Stranger In Town", **Steve Miller's** "Book Of Dreams", **Macca's** "Band On The Run" and **Pink Wotsit's** "Dark Side Of The Moon" (all Capitol).

And though these are all exorbitantly priced, the scam is that punters are practically queuing up to buy such artifacts.

Fred Dellar

ASGARD
PROUDLY PRESENT

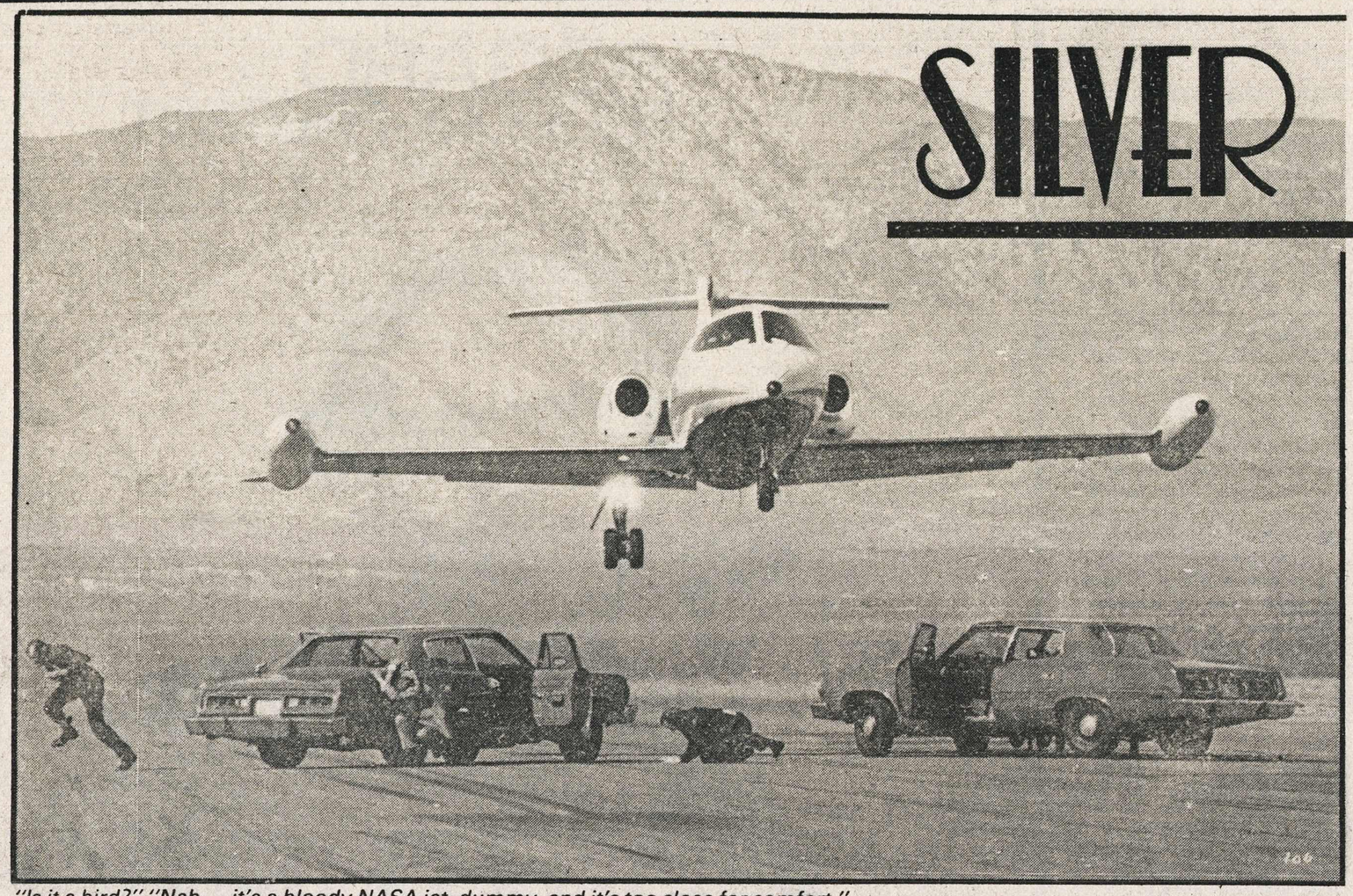


Van Morrison
IN CONCERT

February
Sun. 18th CORK City Hall
Tues. 20th BELFAST Whitla Hall
Wed. 21st BELFAST Whitla Hall
Thu. 22nd DUBLIN Stadium
Fri. 23rd DUBLIN Stadium
Sat. 24th DUBLIN Stadium
Mon. 26th LONDON Hammersmith Odeon
Tues. 27th LONDON Hammersmith Odeon
Wed. 28th LONDON Hammersmith Odeon

March
Fri. 2nd MANCHESTER Apollo
Sun. 4th PORTSMOUTH Guildhall
Mon. 5th BRIGHTON Dome
Tues. 6th BRISTOL Colston Hall
Wed. 7th OXFORD New Theatre
Sat. 10th SHEFFIELD City Hall
Sun. 11th BIRMINGHAM Odeon
Mon. 12th LEICESTER De Montford Hall
Tue. 13th DERBY Assembly Hall
Thu. 15th EDINBURGH Odeon
Fri. 16th GLASGOW Apollo
Sat. 17th LANCASTER University
Mon. 19th NEWCASTLE City Hall

SILVER SCREEN



"Is it a bird?" "Nah — it's a bloody NASA jet, dummy, and it's too close for comfort." The astronauts take off from their desert hideaway in Peter Hyams' Capricorn One.

You'll believe a man can lie

Capricorn One

Directed by Peter Hyams
Starring Elliott Gould, James Brolin and Brenda Vaccaro
(ITC)

"It's true. I read it in the papers, saw it on TV."

Don't you believe it. In fact, you probably won't. The sanctity of newsprint and presentation is no longer inviolable. Determined investigative journalism may well have brought Watergate to the attention of the American public (and Hollywood), but Woodward and Bernstein paradoxically did more to discredit than credit the news media.

Better late than never but why, the questions begged, wasn't the corruption of the Nixon regime uncovered earlier? What had seemed a triumph for democracy in action duly became little more than a Phyrric victory, a dispiriting reminder that the machinery and machinations of the modern state are laws unto themselves, that there really is no such thing as 'open' government.

As a result we can only surmise, only presume that for every Watergate there must be Mammon knows how many state-supervised 'scandals' that pass unnoticed or unchecked by the so-called 'free' press of the Western world.

And how much information is misinformation? What is news and what isn't? Who decides, and why? We don't know, can't know.

Capricorn One mulls over these matters and suggests one possible area of operations in which we could be comprehensively duped without so much as a batting of the eyelid before the wool comes down. The film's main contention is straightforward enough — that, with the ever more sophisticated media technology made available to it, the state apparatus can and almost certainly will fool almost all the people all the time.

The particular shrine at stake here is that once wondrous flag-waver, the US space programme. And it burns this way. Against a background of mounting political and public apathy towards the programme (human race before outer space, etc.), a Marshot is scheduled.

Minutes before liftoff, the three astonished astronauts are hitched out of their capsule and the Saturn V blasts on its way without them. The trio are told that their spacecraft's life support systems had been found faulty and that they're simply going to have to fake the whole mission by prancing around an elaborate mock-up of the Martian landscape in a disused hangar not 300 miles from NASA's HQ in Houston, Texas. And if they refuse to co-operate, their families will be 'put at risk' (i.e. killed) — to say nothing, of course, of the damage done to what's left of national prestige and NASA's future programmes. The crew duly toe the line with a mixed measure of reluctance and resignation.

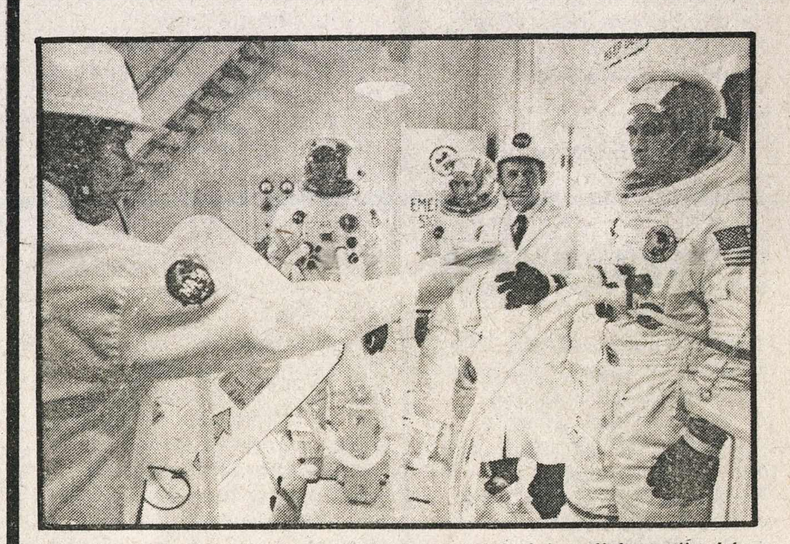
And so it goes until months later, minutes before the mission is completed and they're effectively dead to the world. Which is when their flight becomes their plight in earnest . . .

Hyams has written and directed a film that's as credible as it is contentious.

He draws a steel-taut gridwork of fine lines — between the humanitarian face of government policy and the ruthlessness with which it's prepared to execute same, between the astronauts' professional and personal obligations, between apparent and actual reality.

The constant irony of the situation is carefully emphasised by juxtaposition: vice-president and dignitaries applaud the liftoff, cut to crew being bundled into waiting Learjet; the nation watches the Mars landing on TV, cut to hangar and range back from the film set (within a film set), thus exposing the instruments of deception.

As it is, *Capricorn One* doesn't depend on elaborate special effects for its impact,



"And here's your processed cheese sandwiches." Actually, it's the Good Book, full of warming anecdotes for the 'Mars-bound' astronauts.

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Hitler — A Career

Produced by Joachim C Fest and Christian Herrendoefer

(GTO)

"The film tries to give a rational and concrete account of the Hitler period" . . . "The film cannot change German history: it does not glorify it either. It illuminates it: as much for those who lived through the Hitler period as for those who can no longer imagine what it was like" . . .

Such are some of the motivations behind the 155 minute *Hitler — A Career,* a documentary account of how Adolf Hitler, born in 1889 the son of an Austro-Hungarian customs official, rose in the world to become the Fuhrer of The Third Reich and the man who must be held most responsible for the deaths of some 65 million people in the years immediately preceding and including the 1939-45 World War.

Hitler — A Career uses only authentic film footage taken at the time: "original evidence from the Nazi period", as the publicity kit puts it. The film itself stems from the work of Joachim C Fest, a 52 year old German historian and the author of a voluminous biography of Hitler — and it's Fest's commentary, narrated in English by Stephen Murray, that accompanies the visual and aural material assembled here from sources in Europe and America.

If you see this man — affectionately known as Der Fuhrer — please telephone Shaw Taylor immediately.

But is *A Career* the responsible and 'illuminating' film it purports to be? After all, it deals with what many have described as a "dangerous memory". In a word, yes. The film makes no pretence of objectivity. Fest's strongest attribute as a historian — apart from his being a German writing about Germany and so capable of insights that outsiders might ignore — is his acute sense of the sociological and psychological.

His Hitler biography races through the '39-45 war with almost indecent haste dwelling instead in great detail on the social climate of Germany in the previous decades, a climate which Hitler exploited with frightful astuteness. It's often forgotten that, even though he never won a majority electorial vote from the German people, Hitler gained his first taste of power in Germany by supposedly democratic means. *A Career* goes a long way to explaining but *not* excusing how and why this occured, outlining the weakness and indecisivness of Germany in the aftermath of the country's crushing defeat in the 1914-18 World War.

True to its claims, the film does not 'glorify' or glamourise the Nazi past and its "fascination for geometry", the rigid geometry of the 'mass will' on public display.

The revealing footage of the Nuremburg rallies, for example, is carefully stripped of any residual impact it might have for the unwitting observer. This is achieved by intentionally editing and often absurdist cross-cutting of film and images. Meanwhile the commentary's pertinent analyses successfully neutralise the effect such spectacles were originally intended to convey. Hitler's speeches are similarly defused.

The overriding impression Fest creates of Hitler himself is that of a peverse, paradoxical figure. Neither the monster of popular fiction nor the long-suffering and self-sacrificing 'leader' of his own propaganda, Hitler is viewed as a man whose corrupt, criminal vision of a new social order was allowed to become nightmarish reality by a largely unsuspecting Germany and Old Europe.

At once a revolutionary and a reactionary, Hitler was unnaturally attuned to the spirit of his and Germany's times. Fest's film lucidly examines many aspects of Hitler's complex personality and of the brutal regime whose characteristics were crystallised by — some would say in — him, and it goes on to make the necessary connections. Hitler was peculiarly insensitive to human suffering in his pursuit of absolute power; so was the dreadful machinery of his state, The Third Reich.

And how did the Nazis succeed in institutionalising terror on such a massive scale, how did they carry so many minds with them? This the flim makes horrifyingly clear with its dark and dismal images of the Hitler state in action — by dehumanising those minds, by appealing to one of the most appalling perceptions of totalitarianism recent history has seen, but subjugating the one into the many, the individual into the mass.

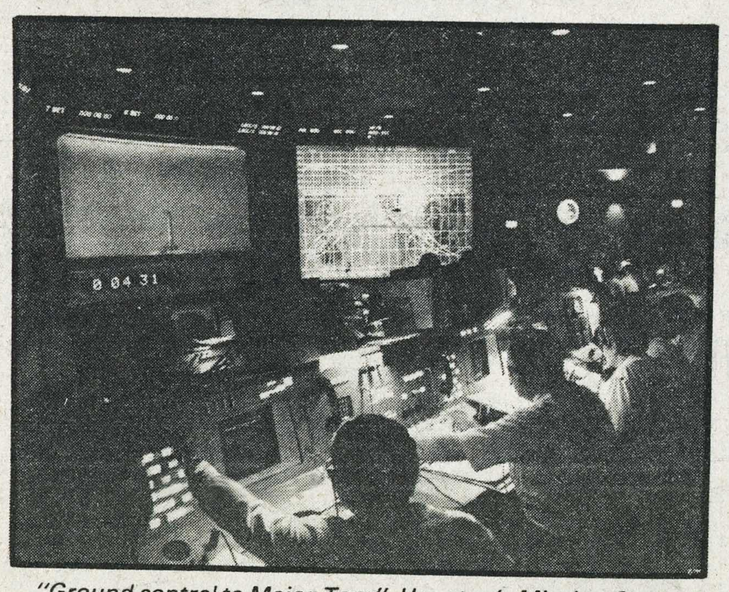
A Career has been criticised in some quarters for not emphasising the inhumanity of Hitler's Reich strongly enough, in other for ignoring or failing to clarify specific points at issue. These charges seem to me to be mostly unfounded, but will be answered by Fest himself in an *NME* interview in the near future.

In the meantime, the neo-Nazi lunatic fringe are much more likely to be outraged by Fest's often disparaging assessment of Hitler — and so they should be, outraged and angered into impotence.

The rest of us will, I think, find in the film much that is chastening and thought-provoking. *Hitler — A Career* is the best possible antidote to the insidiuosly sympathetic reappraisals of the Nazi era that have emerged as, for many, Hitler receeds into history.

Lest we forget — and this film does not let us forget — fascism is as evil now as it was then.

Angus MacKinnon



"Ground control to Major Tom". Houston's Mission Control keeps an eye on the cheese sandwiches' progress.

but instead examines just how such effects can be utilised: the technology of tractability. *Star Wars* or *Close Encounters* it isn't — but what it lacks in hallucinatory hardware, it more than makes up for in visual verve.

Hyams' style is acute, often aggressive. A runaway car's eyeview of Houston at 100 mph outbites *Bullitt,* and a later sequence of modern Hughes helicopters chasing an antiquated Stearman biplane scores A plus for action and angle of attack. The director's screen psychology is also strong; his representation of the 'copters as bug-like predators and of their sun-visored crews as faceless agents of authority recalls Roeg's forgotten monument to smallperson's paranoia, *The Man Who Fell To Earth,* and — even more unsettlingly — Hitchcock's *Psycho.*

And, creaming the cake, *Capricorn One* is well casted and scripted. Elliott Gould engages gear for the first time in far too long as an awkward but ambitious reporter bent on securing the big scoop, and David Doyle relishes his brief comic caper as that all-American archetype, the editor. Sam Waterson wisecracks worldwearily as one of the astronauts, James Brolin beats big, big heart as another, and Hal Holbrook oils like a castor as the unpleasantly unctious mission controller.

So that's *Capricorn One,* a 'serious' film about the uses and abuses of film and film technology that manages to — excuse expletive — entertain magnificently at the same time. Interestingly though, it's bombed in the States. Maybe the folks there are as bored by exposes of state skullduggery as we seen to be (the UK public and most of its press lapped up Thorpe, sanctimoniously ignored Bingham on Rhodesian sanctions-busting).

See it. Believe it. Oh, the irony.

Angus MacKinnon

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Mon 29th Jan (Adm £1.00)
PERCY'S PACKAGE
featuring
THE ANGELIC UPSTARTS & THE INVADERS & DJ Jerry Floyd

Tues 30th Jan (Adm £1.25)
ZAINE GRIFF
Plus guests & Joe Lung

Wed 31st Jan (Adm £1.00)
THE RECORDS
Plus support & Joe Lung

Thurs 1st Feb (Adm 85p)
STRAIGHT 8
Plus support & Ian Fleming

HAMBURGERS AND OTHER HOT AND COLD SNACKS AVAILABLE

THE NASHVILLE ROOM

FULLERS TRADITIONAL ALES

Thur 25th Jan 75p
Robbie Burns Night with
THE VALVES & Nightflight

Fri 26th Jan £1.25
THE BISHOPS & Nova Scotia

Sat 27th Jan £1
THE EDGE & The Screens

Sun 28th Jan 75p
The Farewell London Appearance of
WARREN HARRY & The Idols

Mon 29th Jan £2
P. J. PROBY & Support

Tue 30th Jan £1
THE TROGGS & The Stickers

Thur 1st Feb £1
THE MEMBERS & Local Operator

CORNER CROMWELL ROAD/NORTH END ROAD, W14
(Adjacent West Kensington Tube Tel: 01-603 6071)

FAIRFIELD HALL CROYDON

OUTLAW CONCERTS PRESENT

OSIBISA

Sunday 11th February
7.30p.m.
Tickets £3.00, £2.50, £2.25, £2.00, £1.75
From box office & usual agents

ASTORIA THEATRE

01-439 8031 01-734 4291

CAPITAL RADIO 194 by arrangement with Brian Rix for Cooney-Marsh Theatres Ltd. present

JACK GOOD'S **Oh Boy!**

8 Rock'n Roll Concerts
SUNDAYS Jan 28 Feb 4, 11, 18 5·30pm & 8·00pm
Prices: £2.50: £3.50: £4.00

THE BRIDGE HOUSE

23 BARKING ROAD, CANNING TOWN, E16

Thursday, Jan. 25th 30p
Lightning Strikes with
TOO MUCH

Friday, Jan. 26th 40p
GRAND HOTEL

Saturday, Jan. 27th 40p
WARM JETS

Sunday, Jan. 28th 40p
REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD

Monday, Jan. 29th
ROOL THE ROOST

Tuesday, Jan. 30th
DOG WATCH

Wednesday, Jan. 31st
DUTCH BOYS

BRIDGE HOUSE RECORDS LTD.

Britain's First Pub Rock Label announce their first single
"STICKY JACK" c/w "Shellshock"
by WARM JETS

Also our first album "Live," A Week at the Bridge E.16, featuring Jackie Lynton, Remus Down Boulevard, Filthy McNasty, Roll-Ups, S.A.L.T. & Jerry McAvoy Jam.

Both the album and single are available from Lightning Records 01-969 5255; Virgin 01-603 4588; Rough Trade 01-727 4312; Bonaparte 01-681 1490 & Small Wonder 01-520 2727.

Warm Jets playing at The Bridge House, Saturday, Jan. 27th and Friday, Feb 2nd

Good Luck on your tour of Ireland February 4th—15th

TANDEM

Burnt down Friday night
If you had gear there
Ring 01-546 3898
Terry and Marsha

BRUNEL UNIVERSITY S.U.

Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, Middx. Tel. (89) 39125

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 31st
In The Sports Hall

THE KINKS

+ Support

Tickets £1.80 advance, £2.20 on door available from Social Secretary or City Electronics, Uxbridge.
Nearest tube: Uxbridge. Buses: 204, 207, 223, 224
(The Kinks only London appearance)

"BOGROLL IS RIGHT BEHIND YOU, MAGGIE!"

Action Group sends telegram of support to Toory Leader

STAA MARX

Ring NIGEL
01-935 6720

Thurs 25 Jan (with WARM JETS)
EALING
College of Technology
Plus!
THE SECONDARY PICKETS
featuring
LAURIE van TRUCK

Mrs Aardvark, president of BOGROLL *(Bognor Residents opposing Lefty lorry drivers)* told a Press conference in the Snug of the "Floggers Droop": *"The Unions need seeing to and I'm just longing for a General Election."*

LATE NEWS:
STAA MARX debut single "Crazy Weekend/PVS" out soon! *(Panic buyers welcome.)*

TELEPHONE 01-387-0428/9

MUSIC MACHINE

Playing times 10.30 pm and midnight.
CAMDEN HIGH ST. OPP. MORNINGTON CRESCENT TUBE · N.W.1

Wednesday 24th
LANDSCAPE
plus Rednite — Admission £1.

Thursday 25th
CHARLIE AINLEY
plus Whisky — Advance tickets £2.50 from box office

Friday 26th
THE VALVES
plus The Phil Ram Band — Admission £2.00

Saturday 27th
SHOWBIZ KIDS
plus Skin Deep — Admission £2.

Monday 29th
SMALL WONDER RECORDS PRESENT
PATRIK FITZGERALD
plus The Molesters ● plus The Wall
plus Nicky & The Dots ● plus Crass
Admission £1

Tuesday 30th
THE OVAL STAGE SHOW FEATURING
THE SECRETS ● BOBBY HENRY ● SHRINK
Admission £1

Wednesday 31st
PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY
plus Bitch — Admission £1

Thursday 1st
CHELSEA
plus U.K. Subs — plus Raped
Admission £1.50

Saturday 3rd
BETTY BRIGHT & THE ILLUMINATIONS
Featuring Clive Langer, Rusty Egan and Glen Matlock
Admission £2

Tuesday 6th
RADIO STARS
Advance tickets £2 from box office

LICENSED BARS - LIVE MUSIC - DANCING
8PM - 2 AM MONDAY TO SATURDAY

HOPE & ANCHOR

UPPER STREET
ISLINGTON, N.1

Last Year's Festival

Thur 25th Jan £1
ERIC BELL BAND

Fri 26th Jan, Sat 27th Jan £1
SORE THROAT

Sun 28th Jan 75p
THE VALVES

Mon 29th Jan £1
THE TOURISTS

Tue 30th Jan £1
THE TOURISTS

Wed 31st Jan £1
N.U.J. Benefit
THE MEMBERS

Thur 1st Feb *Cellar bar closed for installation of real ale. Watch this space for re-opening date, shortly.*

RECORDWORLD & SOUTHEND TECH. S.U.
present
at the Southend College of Technology

WRECKLESS ERIC

+ Support, Disco & Bar
FRIDAY JANUARY 26th
Tickets £2.00 Doors open 7.30 pm
Enquiries: Southend 353931

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Thursday

Bangor University: **Gillan**
Bedford College of Agriculture: **Rule The Roost**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Hot Water**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Ocean Boulevard**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
Birmingham The Bell: **The Clerks**
Birmingham The Harlequin: **Midwest County**
Blackburn King George's Hall: **UFO**
Blackburn Old Blacks Club: **Silly Wizard**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **Adam & The Ants**
Bournemouth Pinecliff Hotel: **Tours**
Bradford Princeville Club: **Whitefire**
Bradford St George's Hall: **The Kinks / Stadium Dogs**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Tinsels**
Brighton Hungry Years: **Sharafia**
Bristol Brunel Technical College: **Supercharge**
Bristol Crockers: **Freshly Layed Band (for two nights)**
Bristol Polytechnic: **Writz**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Coventry Dog & Trumpet: **The Kidda Band**
Eastbourne Lottbridge Arms: **The Executives**
Glasgow Dial Inn: **The Motels**
Gravesend Red Lion: **Nightrider**
Hanley Victoria Hall: **Nazareth**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **The Young Bucks**
Leamington Spa Crown Hotel: **Snoots**
Liverpool Eric's: **China Street**
London Camden Brecknock: **Scarecrow**
London Camden Dingwalls: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
London Camden Music Machine: **Charlie Ainley**
London Canning Town Bridge House: Angelo Palladino
London Ealing College of Technology: **The Warm Jets / Staa Marx**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Straight 8**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Panties**
London Hammersmith The Rutland: **Fred Rickshaw's Hot Goolies**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Eric Bell Band**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Valves**
London Marquee Club: **Streetband**
London Maunkberry's Club: **Lizzie**
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Beckett: **Tour De Force**
London Royal Albert Hall: **The Osmonds**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Rockhouse/Johnny & The Roccos**
London Strand King's College: **Wreckless Eric/The Softies**
London Tottenham The Spurs: **Agenda**
Norton Canes Dog Track: **Venom**
Nottingham Commodore Suite: **Showaddywaddy**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Hormones**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Lap Region**
Poynton Folk Centre: **John Bull Band-/Pete Castle**
Reading Three Tuns: **El Seven**
Sheffield Psalter Lane Art College: **The New Jets**
Sheffield Shiregreen Club: **Strange Days**
Swansea Brangwyn Hall: **John Martyn**
York Revolution Club: **Waffle**

Friday

Ayr Derlington Hotel: **Black Gorilla**
Bath University: **Roy Hill Band / John Martyn**
Biggleswade Shuttleworth College: **Crazy Cavan " The Rhythm Rockers**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **China Street**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **Bad Earth**
Birmingham Mr. Sam's: **Fashion**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Spitfire**
Blackburn Regent Hotel: **Anniversary (for three days)**
Bromwell Stockwell College: **The Works**
Burton 76 Club: **Zaine Griff**
Cardiff New Theatre: **Alan Price**
Chester Arts Centre: **Swift**
Chiddingly Six Bells: **Harem Scarem**
Derby Bishop Lonsdale College: **Eric Bell Band**
Derby Grandstand Hotel: **Cyclone Eddie / Hong Kong Toys**
Derby Great Hall: **National Youth Jazz Orchestra**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **Hot Water**
Dundee Technical College: **Punishment Of Luxury**
Eastbourne The Cavalier: **Nightrider**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **Andrae Crouch & The Disciples**
Glasgow Burns Howff: **The Deft Jerks**
Hamilton Bell College: **The Trendies**
Hanley Keelings Road Hall: **Discharge / The Wall**
Harlow Technical College: **Stops / Live Wire / The Underdogs**
Harrow College of Technology: **90° Inclusive / Gino & The Sharks**
Ipswich Gaumont Theatre: **UFO**
Johnstone Cochrane House: **Chou Pahrot**
Kettering Windmill Club: **The Bearshank Band**
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: **Red Eye**
Liverpool Eric's: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
Liverpool University: **Gillan**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Camberwell School of Art: **Landscape**
London Camden Brecknock: **Oxy & The Morons**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Sinceros / The Mods**
London Camden Music Machine: **The Valves**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Chiswick John Bull: **The Press**
London City Polytechnic: **Girlschool**
London City University: **After The Fire**
London Enfield Hop Poles: **Kestral**
London Hackney Chat's Palace: **Belt & Braces Band**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Isaac Guillory Band**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Sore Throat**
London Islington Screen On The Green: **This Heat**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Cado Belle / Nova Scotia**
London Kingsway College of Further Education: **The Warm Jets / Staa Marx**
London Notting Hill Old Swan: **Zilch**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
London Rainbow Theatre: **The Osmonds**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Rozaa**
London University College: **Dog Watch**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Gino & The Sharks / The Reds**
London W.9 The Chippenham: **Samuel Goodnight**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **Pressure Shocks**
London W.C.2 School of Economics: **The Red Lights**
Long Crendon Church House: **Downes & Bear / Kitsyke Will**
Manchester Apollo Theare: **The Kinks / Stadium Dogs**
Manchester Mayflower: **Adam & The Ants**
Mansfield Art College: **Art Failure**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Billy J. Kramer & The Dakotas**
Newcastle Mayfair Ballroom: **Nazareth**
Newport Village Club: **The Cruisers**
Nottingham Hearty Good Feloow: **Last Call**
Nottingham Sandpiper: **The Damned**
Oxford Oranges & Lemons: **Double Xposure**
Oxford Polytechnic: **Cheap Trick**
Portsmouth Polytechnic: **Panties**
Rowley Regis Four Ways: **Ocean Boulevard**
Scarborough Penthouse: **Streetband**
Scarborough Limit Club: **Rule The Roost**
Southampton University: **Champion**
Southend Technical College: **Wreckless Eric / The Softies**
St. Helens Glassbridge Club: **The Accelerators**
Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic: **Joe Jackson**
Wavendon The Stables: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
Wentworth Rockingham Arms: **Silly Wizard**
Wolverhampton Lafayette: **Racing Cars**
Worcester College: **Writz**
York College of Ripon & St. John: **Paradox**
York Revolution Club: **Charge**

Saturday

Basingstoke Central Studio: **Landscape**
Belfast Grosvenor Hall: **Andrae Crouch & The Disciples**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Roadside**
Birmingham Fox & Goose: **Paradox**
Birmingham (King's Heath) Hare & Hounds: **Jake Thackray**
Birmingham Odeon: **The Kinks / Stadium Dogs**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Belt & Braces Band**
Bognor Sussex Hotel: **Sharafia**
Bournemouth Pinecliffe Hotel: **Interference**
Brighton Alhambra: **Nicky & The Dots**
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: **The Wild Beasts**
Bristol Polytechnic: **Roy Hill Band**
Bristol University: **Five Hand Reel / Sweet Substitute / Downes & Beer / Hedgehog Pie / Johnny Coppin / Bill Caddick / Nic Jones**

CHEAP TRICK, who created a considerable impact during their short visit last year, arrive this week for a more extensive tour — opening at Oxford (Friday), Plymouth (Saturday) and Leicester (Tuesday).

WRECKLESS ERIC is back on the road, this time topping his own tour and backed by his regular band, The Four Rough Men. Support act is The Softies, and you'll find them all at London (Thursday), Southend (Friday), Northampton (Saturday), Sheffield (Tuesday) and Bradford (Wednesday).

Chelmsford Odeon: **UFO**
Chichester Bishop Otter College: **Panties**
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: **Frankie Miller's Full House**
Durham University: **Racing Cars**
Falkirk The Magpie: **Chou Pahrot**
Galashiels Privateer Bar: **The Motels**
Glasgow Shuffles: **Black Gorilla**
Glasgow Strathclyde University: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
Huddersfield Polytechnic: **Joe Jackson**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Rule The Roost**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Red Eye**
Leeds Staging Post: **Snoots**
Leeds University: **Nazareth**
Lincoln A.J.'s Club: **Girlschool**
Liverpool Eric's: **Adam & The Ants**
London Alexandra Palace: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
London Battersea Arts Centre: **Crisis**
London Camden Brecknock: **Urchin**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Bowles Bros. Band / Beast**
London Camden Electric Ballroom: **The EF Band**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Champion**
London Chelsea The Wheatsheaf: **The V.I.P.'s**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Split Rivitt**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Simon Townshend Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **After The Fire**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Dave Lewis Band**
London Hampstead Westfield College: **Earthbound**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Sore Throat**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Edge / The Screens**
London Marquee Club: **The Cure**
London Rainbow Theatre: **The Osmonds**
London Regent's Park Bedford College: **Hi-Fi**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Rozaa**
London Walthamstow North-East Polytechnic: **The Oval Road Show**
London Welling Duchess of Edinburgh: **Nightrider**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Live Wire / Chris Hamburger**
Manchester Polytechnic: **China Street**
Manchester University: **Ian Matthews**
Margate Dreamland: **The Valves**
Matlock Pavilion: **Eric Bell Band**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **Billy J. Kramer & The Dakotas**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **Zaine Griff**
Newcastle University: **Streetband**
Northampton County Ground: **Wreckless Eric / The Softies**
Nottingham Boat Club: **The Lightning Raiders**
Nottingham Club Malibu: **Slip Hazard & The Blizzards / Vision / Urban Cadets / Features**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Outward Bound**
Nottingham University: **Supercharge**
Oxford RAF Bilston: **Fashion**
Plymouth Polytechnic: **Cheap Trick**
Portsmouth Polytechnic: **Hot Water**
Snodland The Bull: **Harem Scarem**
Stratford-on-Avon Green Dragon: **Orphan**
Tamworth Progressive Club: **The Kidda Band**
West Bromwich Coach & Horses: **Ocean Boulevard**
Weymouth Pavilion: **Crazy Cavan 'N' The Rhythm Rockers**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime) and Glasgow The Amphora (evening): **The Trendies**
York Revolution Club: **Neon Hearts**

Sunday

Accrington Lakeland Lounge: **Rule The Roost**
Bakewell Monsal Head: **The Bombers**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **Ian Matthews**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prima Donna**
Bishops Stortford Old Maltings: **Antaries (lunchtime)/Society Rhythm Orchestra (evening)**
Blackpool Tiffany's: **Roy Ayers**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Piranhas**
Bristol Colston Hall: **UFO**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Burnley Bank Hall Miners Club: **Whitefire**
Coventry Ryton Bridge: **The Kidda Band**
Crewe Grand Junction Hotel: **The Accelerators**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **Showaddywaddy**
Dawden Social Club: **Freebird**
Dumfries Stagecoach: **Streetband**
Fallin Stuart Hall Tavern: **The Deft Jerks**
Fife St. Andrew's University: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
Hull Arts Centre: **Red Eye**
Jacksdale Grey Topper: **Eric Bell Band**
Liverpool Empire Theatre: **Nazareth**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Camden Brecknock: **The Vipers**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Stan Blues Band**
London Charing-X Rd. Astoria Theatre: **Jack Good's "Oh Boy" with Alvin Stardust / Joe Brown / Les Gray / Shakin' Stevens / Freddie 'Fingers' Lee etc.**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **Dog Watch**
London Finchley Torrington: **Crazy Cavan 'n' The Rhythm Rockers**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Champion**
London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: **Roy Hill Band**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Sucker**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Radiators**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Warren Harry / The Idols**
London Marquee Club: **The Young Bucks / Portraits**
London Paddington Western Counties: **Rednite**
London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime): **Blue Moon**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Colin Bates**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Annie Ross / Harry South Quartet**
Mansfield James Maude Club: **Strange Days**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Press**
Portsmouth Rotary Club: **Nightrider**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Paul Downes & Phil Beer / Terry Walsh**
Sheffield Big Tree: **The New Jets**
Slough Fulcrum Theatre: **Alan Price**
Stratford-on-Avon Ettington Park Manor: **Orphan**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **The Valves**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Freebird**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Orphan**
Bradford Metro Inn: **Red Eye**
Brentwood Youth House: **Silly Wizard**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Executives**
Brighton Dome: **UFO**
Bristol Colston Hall: **Nazareth**
Chester Smartyz Club: **Stops**
Edingburgh Tiffany's: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations/Joe Jackson**
Harpenden Methodist Hall: **After The Fire**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Ilkley Jack O'Lantern Club: **Silly Wizard**
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: **Butterflies**
Liverpool The Crown: **The Clerks**
London Camden Brecknock: **First Aid**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Cliche/ Screens/Shy**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Warm Jets**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Valves**
London Marquee Club: **Pursey's Package with The Angelic Upstarts/The Invaders**
London Old Brompton Rd Troubadour: **Steve Lloyd Paul**
London Paddington Western Counties: **Kestral**
London Putney Half Moon: **Hamish Imlach**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Cuddly Toys/Crass**
London W.14 The Kensington: **The Press**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **The Osmonds**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Writz**
Mansfield Civic Theatre: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Norwich Boogie House: **The Members**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Saltburn Philmore Disco: **Streetband**
Swansea Circles Club: **Adam & The Ants**

Tuesday

Bath Brillig Arts Centre: **Racing Cars**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Cartoons**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Wildlife**
Brighton Top Rank: **Roy Ayers**
Bristol Colston Hall: **The Kinks/Stadium Dogs**
Brentwood Youth House: **Silly Wizard**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Executives.**
Derby Romeo and Juliet: **Gerry and The Pacemakers**
Glasgow Tiffany's: **Joe Jackson**
High Wycombe Baptist Hall: **After The Fire**
Huddersfield Polytechnic: **Punishment Of Luxury**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **Nazareth**
Leicester University: **Cheap Trick**
Lichfield Bowling Green: **Venom**
London Camden Brecknock: **Portraits**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Panties**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Fame**
London Hammersmith Palais: **Elvis Costello and The Attractions/Richard Hell and The Voidoids/John Cooper Clarke**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Troggs/The Stickers**
London Marquee Club: **Zaine Griff**
London Maunkberry's Club: **Beaver**
London Royal Albert Hall: **London Symphony Orchestra plays "Classic Rock"**
London Sheen The Derby Arms: **Freddy's Feetwarmers**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Johnny Barnes Quartet**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Press/Neon Hearts**
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: **The Infants**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Virginia Wolf/The Vibrant Thigh**
Manchester Polytechnic: **Landscape**
Newcastle City Hall: **Andrae Crouch and The Disciples**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Portsmouth Polytechnic: **Dave Lewis Band**
Reading University: **Hi-Fi**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Wreckless Eric/The Softies**
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: **UFO**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Wednesday

Bath Brillig Arts Centre: **Racing Cars**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Quartz**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Bournemouth Pinecliffe Hotel: **Thieves Like Us**
Bradford University: **Wreckless Eric/The Softies**
Brighton Dome: **Nazareth**
Chatham Scamps Disco: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Colchester The Centre: **After The Fire**
Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic: **Squad**
Derby Romeo & Juliet: **Gerry & The Pacemakers**
Great Yarmouth Stars & Garters: **Girlschool**
Leicester Polytechnic: **Horslips**
London Camden Brecknock: **Tennis Shoes**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Garry Holton's Gems**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **Out To Lunch**
London Camden Music Machine: **Punishment Of Luxury**
London Chadwell Heath Greyhound: **Dog Watch**
London E.1 St Hilda's East Club: **Belt & Braces Band**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Ex-Directory**
London Harrow Road. Windsor Castle: **64 Spoons**
London Maunkberry's Club: **Dana Gillespie**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **Kestral**
London Peckham Montpelier: **Blue Moon**
London Royal Albert Hall. **London Symphony Orchestra plays "Classic Rock"**
London Shepherds Bush The Trafalgar: **Gino & The Sharks**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Brian Lemon Quartet**
London Victoria The Venue: **Ian Matthews**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Local Operator/The Soul Boys**
London Wimbledon Nelson's Club: **A.B.C.**
Loughborough University: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Andre Crouch & The Disciples**
Mountain Ash The Palace: **John Grimaldi's Cheap Flights**
Newport Stowaway Club: **Adam & The Ants**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihio**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Some Chicken**
Purley Tiffany's: **Roy Ayers**
Solihull Golden Lion: **Orphan**
South Woodford Railway Bell: **Original East Side Stompers**
York Arts Centre: **Landscape**

HORSLIPS set out on a major concert and college tour, which aids promotion of their newly-released DJM album "The Man Who Built America." The first date is at Leicester on Wednesday.

BRIAN B'S LIVE PAGE

PHONE BRIAN ON 01 330 6053

Jeffrey S. Kruger (for Ember Concert Promotions Ltd) present
TWO OF NASHVILLE'S ALL TIME GREAT COUNTRY STARS on ONE BIG CONCERT
BILL ANDERSON
FARON YOUNG
MARY LOU TURNER & THE PO' FOLKS
and his COUNTRY DEPUTIES

GROSVENOR HALL, BELFAST, THURSDAY 15th FEBRUARY
Tickets available from the Box Office. Tel. (0232) 25105
KELVIN HALL, GLASGOW, FRIDAY 16th FEBRUARY at 8.00 pm
Tickets £4.50; £4.00; £3.50; £3.00; £2.50. Available from the Box Office Tel (041) 552 5961
CAPITOL ABERDEEN, SATURDAY 17th FEBRUARY at 9.15 pm
Tickets £4.50; £4.00; £3.50; £3.00. Available from the Box Office Tel (0224) 23141
CITY HALL NEWCASTLE. SUNDAY 18th FEBRUARY at 5.00 pm and 8.00 pm
Tickets available from the Box Office. Tel (0632) 20007
EMPIRE LIVERPOOL, TUESDAY 20th FEBRUARY at 8.00 pm
Tickets £4.50; £4.00; £3.50; £3.00; £2.50. Available from the Box Office Tel (051) 709 1555
ABC THEATRE, PETERBOROUGH. WEDNESDAY 21st FEBRUARY at 6.15 pm and 8.45 pm
Tickets £4.50; £4.00; £3.50. Available from the Box Office Tel (0733) 43504
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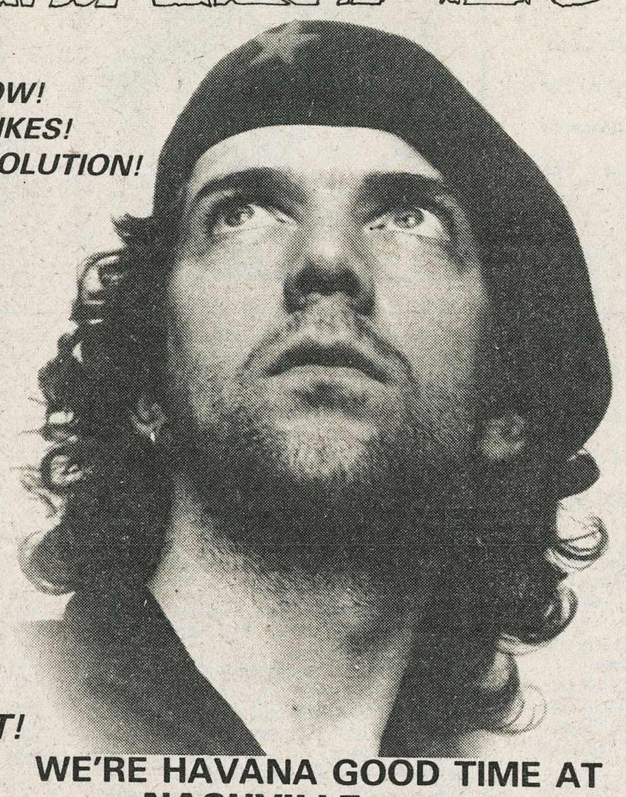

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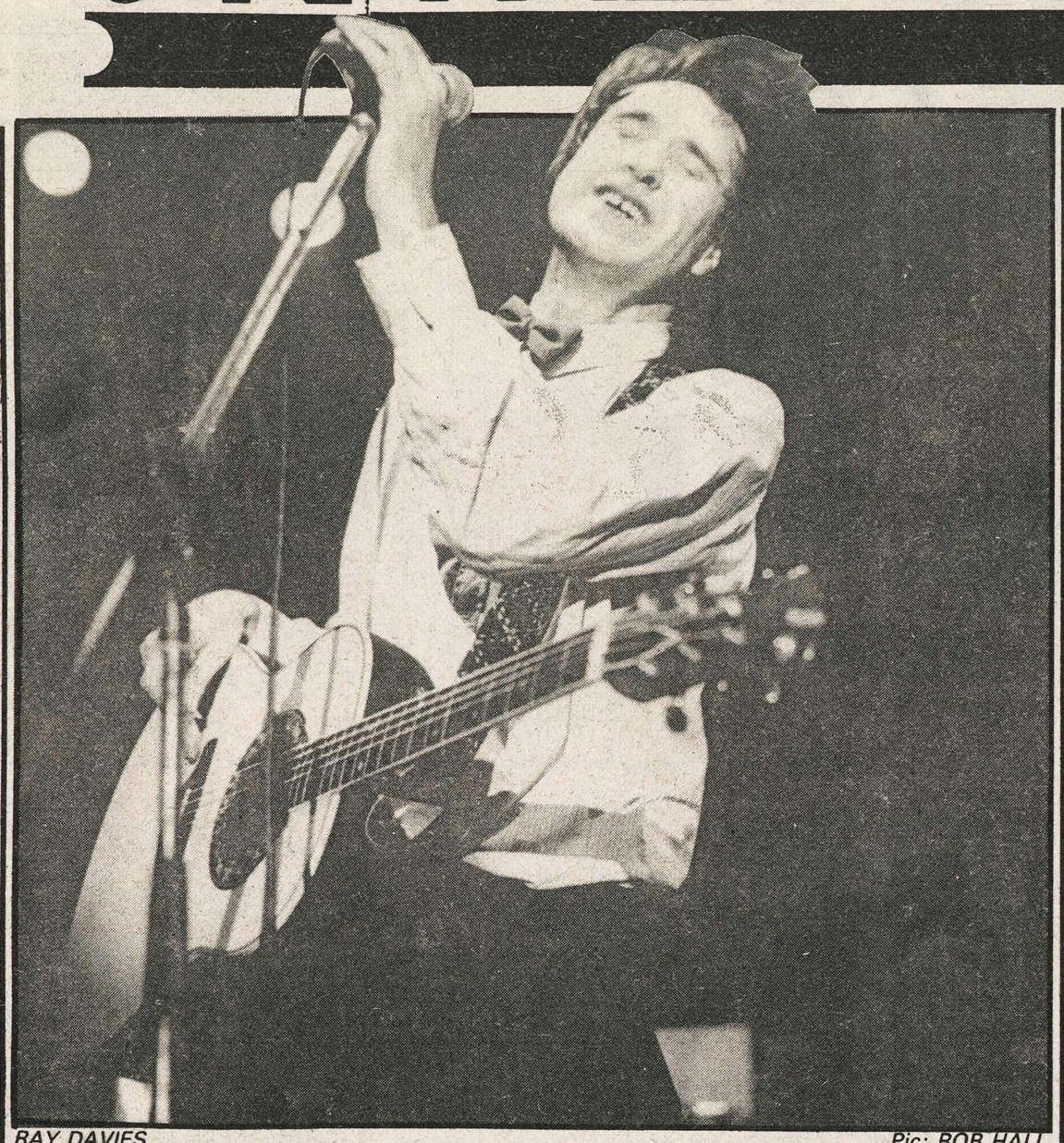


RAY DAVIES Pic: ROB HALL

He stoops to Kinker

The Kinks

Oxford

After 15 years and various 'experimental' phases, the Muswell Hillbillies have finally found a near-perfect format.

This time round, it's a smoothly accessible product, conservative in the extreme yet undeniably enjoyable. Revamped for added impact in heavy metal guise, we have The Kinks as medium-slick vaudeville, as hack social commentary, as ageing sentimentality, as show band rock-a-boogie.

It's like watching their animated case history with its successes and failures effectively evened out by a genuine sense of occasion.

Strange too, after all this time, that by merely enlarging his vision from the specific ("Dedicated Follower Of Fashion") to the general ("20th Century Man") Ray Davies has managed to sustain his reactionary stance. Stranger still are all his "I still believe in it"-type song intros: a heavy-handed persuasion that his oldies possess a timeless *relevance*.

The crowd obviously have confidence in him; it's not so certain at the start that the feeling's entirely mutual. Three numbers in he's leaping around in his red dickie-bow and tacky blue velvet suit, cranking up the old hand-clap routines and sing-a-long-a-"Alcohol". Seeing as half the hall went totally tapioca the moment he set foot on stage, there seems no sense in forcing the issue.

Once assured they're all behind him, he loosens up and the rest of the band come into focus. The solid arrangements suit the carthorse drum style of Mick Avory, who looks torn between alarm and disinterest. Jim Rodford belts out the bass lines, Gordon Edwards fills in some fine keyboards, and a horn section (tenor and trombone) add warmth to the raunchier numbers.

Far right, a slightly wizened Dave Davies peels off the flashy solos, and plays, as always, as though his soul's in the music while his mind's out on permanent loan.

They weigh in early with "Sleepwalker", "Life On The Road" and the unfamiliar "Low Budget", which proves to be instant nostalgia after a brace of chorus lines. We get "Lola" — cue community crooning and Ray's overtly camp persona on parade — and an excellent retread of "Sunny Afternoon", the one song he's *never* surpassed.

In a touch of fraternal affection, or perhaps just an excuse to go and change his shirt, he gives Dave the vocal spot for the dreadful 'heavy ballad' "Trust Your Heart".

Ray reappears to lift the shutters on the obligatory hit churn-out facade by singing odd lines from old faves and then cutting straight into "You Really Got Me". It's a self-parody that's as inevitable as the songs themselves, and merely enhances the end of the show.

They hurtle into some boozy R'n'B, with "Live Life" and "Little Queenie" (as much of a surprise for the band as anyone else), and end with a bulldozer version of "All Day And All Of The Night", wrapped up with ten seconds of "Superman". Why they didn't play the whole number, I can't even hazard a guess.

But then The Kinks have always operated solely on their own terms. Judge them otherwise and you're wasting your time.

Mark Ellen

Chic

Hammersmith Odeon

Chic are probably the most elegantly stylish purveyors of Disco currently operating, and inevitably the Odeon was packed to capacity with sweet young things, and less sweet older things, worshipping at the altar of sophistication, sex and expensive living.

Everyone was there to have a good time, and *sex* was the word. Cool, black and dressed in sharp suits, furs and jewellery the band are the embodiment of their aptly chosen name.

Even if you don't dig Disco you can't deny the enormous impact this music has had on the youth of the world; and when the group hit the stage the reception was tumultuous. By the third number, *everyone* was up and dancing.

Oozing wealthy decadence Alfa Anderson, the principal singer in a cutaway black dress, and Lucy Martin in Gucci trousers and fur jacket shared the vocals, while Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers were the musical mainspring on bass and lead respectively. Tony Thompson provided a lightweight, rocksteady beat throughout and the remaining stage room was taken up by two keyboard players and three beautiful lady violinists. *Tres chic, n'est ce pas?*

The Chic Cheer segued inton "Everybody Dance" and then into "You Can Get By If You Try" from the first album: a three-pronged assault that turned the whole place into a discotheque in 15 minutes flat. "Le Freak" was an impeccably-placed fourth and the cheers were deafening.

Never mind about disco, "Le Freak" is a great pop single; the perfect dance tune. Unfortunately it seemed to be the best song of the evening as all subsequent material was comparatively *ordinaire*.

The next single "I Want Your Love", a slow ballad by Alfa, and "Dance, Dance, Dance" closed the set; but the constant barrage of whistles, shouts and applause brought them back to reprise "Le Freak".

Lasting well under an hour, the set was an ideal lesson in economy — much to the dissatisfaction of the crowd. Cheers turned into boos and catcalls to intimidate the reluctant band into returning, and then only to play again a hesitant "Everybody Dance".

Although the nine song set was *effectively* short, it was curious that two songs were repeated. And certain fans were understandably critical, complaining darkly that they hadn't got their money's worth.

Yet Chic are undoubtedly first class salespeople, and with a commodity as popular as Disco they can't fail.

They gave a good, tight sparkling show with verve and style. That I remained unmoved for most of the concert is probably due either to my age or university background . . .

I wouldn't actually buy what they're selling, but you can put me down for free samples.

Neil Norman

Freaking cheek to Chic *Pic: TOM SHEEHAN*

XTC give Heads head

Talking Heads XTC

New York

XTC could not have made a more auspicious American debut than supporting Talking Heads in New York.

Indeed, the pairing of these two bands was great sense. Both share an 'artiness' and seem to represent the intellectual flank of the new music: and both use rhythmic experimentation and evocatively strange lyrics.

But balanced against their shared affinity for the avant-garde is the recent broadening of Talking Heads' audience: they have finally broken on to radio with their cover of Al Green's "Take Me To The River". It's a shame they did it with a cover, and not one of David Byrne's own quirky compositions.

Nevertheless, Heads are even being played by MOR stations, and many of the kids at the Beacon Theatre had never been near CBGB's, but had heard "River" on the radio. They were curious to check out this band.

What they made of XTC was hard to tell. The reaction to their set ranged from polite to enthusiastic, but was never really excited or wild. However, XTC did perform well, turning in an accomplished set of thoughtful music (alas, sometimes too thoughtful) with some peaks of real excitement.

They opened with "Science Friction", followed by "Meccanik Dancing". Although the clipped automaton rhythms of this were Devo-like, the band were reminiscent of Wire and determinedly serious. And on these numbers keyboardist Barry Andrews made twisted, discordant commentaries on the songs' rhythms.

"Crosswires", with some shrieking sax from Andrews, came off like a New York noo wave concoction. But they picked up with "Crowded Room", and its stark rhythmic shifts created a dynamic, choppy tension that was overtly Heads-ish.

The audience noticed this too because the response started to build, and the momentum was sustained with "Supertuff", with a great keyboard and guitar finish, and "This Is Pop".

I hate to fault a band for being adventurous (and XTC's songwriting is certainly that), but to keep up with the intricacies of their material they often sounded laboured. "Battery Brides" and "Crosswires" suffered because of that; and they came across most effectively when their material ("Crowded Room", "This Is Pop") was more directly engaging and accessible.

For Talking Heads this gig was a triumphant homecoming after several months of extensive global touring.

They are not now the band who first attracted a cult following two years ago. The early Heads were always about something: anxiety, neurosis, estrangement; the manic edge of our lives. Then Byrne was clearly the centre of attention, his nervous vocal yelps and his hesitant stage mannerisms personified the concerns of his songs.

That nervousness has gone and, full of confidence, he's unable to portray the dislocation he was singing about. Now he uses the tools of a professional performer to get across his point.

The trade-off was inevitable, the deal more than fair. It was a joy to hear him sing so well, with such control and expressiveness, and play so adeptly. He still hit those wacked-out high pitches, but he used them to play and tease with.

Byrne has matured into a masterful performer and he no longer *has* to be the main focal point.

The group, always tight, have coalesced into a perfect unit: Jerry Harrison's rhythm guitar and keyboards have a loose, swinging feel that perfectly compliments Byrne's percussive funkiness; Tina Weymouth's bass lines, which once merely underlined the action, have become more aggressive; Chris Frantz may be the most precise drummer in rock, with a perfectly crisp and clear sound.

They have also developed the songs. "Book I Read", the oddball poem Byne originally wrote on a beat-up acoustic and which became a soul-strut love song on the first album, was a high-tech stage vehicle at The Beacon, charged with ringing guitar energy.

They embellished the ending of "Stay Hungry" with neat guitar-keyboards interplay; and at the beginning of "New Feeling" Byrne strode over to the keyboards (something I'd never seen him do before) and created the sound of bongos and then xylophone, before the band moved into the song.

The main fault of the set was the lack of new material. They played only one new song, "Electricity"; but at least the new arrangements of the old ones helped make up for that.

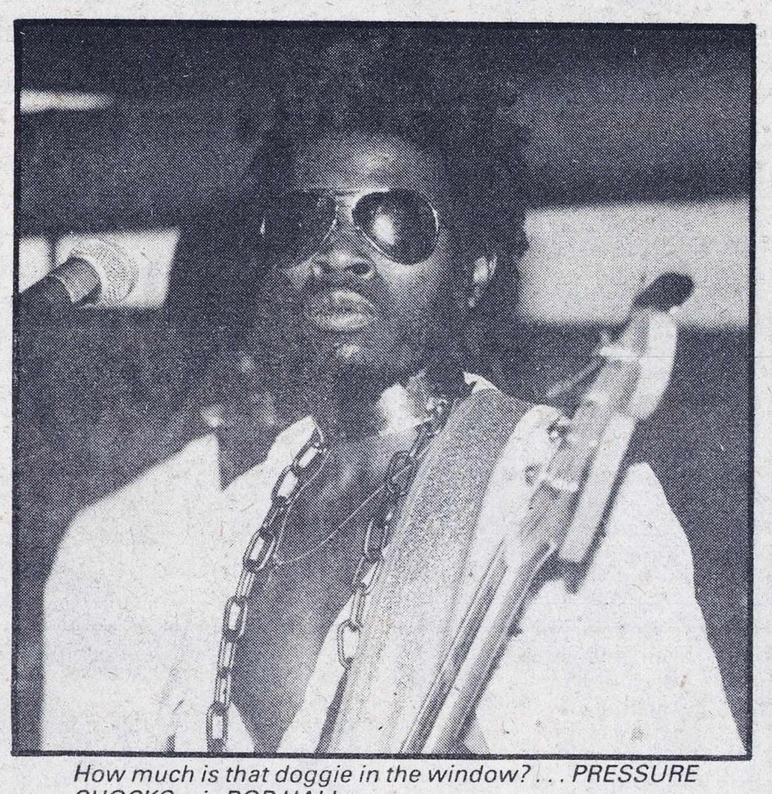
Even so, now Talking Heads are popular on the airwaves they've clearly been influenced by the stage-tricks of mainstream rock bands, and all their songs ended with elaborate flourishes. Yet Byrne was determined to preserve his unique style, and as he closed each number with a flurry of chords he invariably skidded across the stage as if on rollerskates.

Right: he'll *always* be *our* David.

Richard Grat.

Bald vulgarity...Pressure release

"A right bunch of Angels, ain't we, mush . . ." THE ANGELIC UPSTARTS, pic ALAN JOHNSON.



How much is that doggie in the window? . . . PRESSURE SHOCKS, pic ROB HALL.

The Angelic Upstarts The Invaders

Wolverhampton

After a moderately successful opening night at Birmingham's cushioned Barbarellas, Pursey's Package slid to Wolverhampton.

It was The Angelic Upstarts' turn to open, but their angry, hungry, funny rock triumphed. The Invaders' crisp, slick rock, active but obvious and inconsistent, fails to drive the feet or stretch the imagination and has limited impact next to the brute force of the wild Upstarts.

The Upstarts going down well, The Invaders not, should be typical on the tour. Many will be drawn to see the package because of Pursey's involvement, so the Upstarts inevitably conquer.

Rawer and rougher, as witty and crude as Sham, their noise is a perfectly / imperfectly achieved balance of inspiration and stun, of few chords and much delightfully degenerate gracelessness.

They manically play a crass, clumsy rock that aims to do nothing but hurt, humour and involve. Any messages, that are naively naughty or spitefully sincere, are vague linings within the corrugated, dirty rock. The moment matters, nothing else.

Its immediacy and aggression is menacing, possessive, tinged with black humour, and its aim is simple: it either succeeds (inspires movement) or fails (inspires diffidence). It does this without insulting.

The beefy, brutal Upstarts don't, couldn't, colour their music and presentation with disrupting shades of image/mottos/politics/; their loud, laconic 'chunks' of invective ('songs' is too effete a word) are about things which closely concern them: their immediate environment — sex, police, students and drink, their commitment and onstage glee, makes them just about the purest, hardest aesthetically unappealing punk group since The Worst, whilst lacking that group's musical fascination and experimentation.

They're not pretty; they're not boring.

The music is vulgar, bold, bald but crushingly effective. And to hear their cramped, inarticulate but ambitious doodling in some of the songs is more encouraging than the messing about on Genesis or Ultravox albums.

Both the Upstarts and The Invaders depict, or convey, harshness and rebellion; the Upstarts' is ugly and untamed, The Invaders' strict and clipped. So the Upstarts are vigorous, The Invaders contrived.

The Invaders played a superficially strong, neat set of reasonable, expressive songs, glossy and cluttered with frail subtlety. They're careful and caring, but their music is too manicured and meticulous, and very traditional without being impassioned; unlike the Upstarts who are as equally traditional and certainly more repetitive.

The Invaders use their musical competence in a very ordinary way; the Upstarts ignore their lack of technique and get on with it. The Invaders' tastefulness is repelling; the Upstarts' uncouth urgency is glorious.

It is not fair to force comparisons, but it is illuminitive.

The Upstarts thrive on spontaneity, The Invaders rely on restraint and dignity. The Upstarts give the impression they know they're not important; The Invaders give the impression they think they are.

Essentially, The Invaders are less communicative and exciting than the Upstarts. They write disciplined structured songs, dabble in reggae, rock, pop, and sound very ordinary. Their musical ability is not used well.

The Angelic Upstarts write severe, hard songs that run into each other, and sound great. Their musical inability is used well.

Simplicity triumphs again; insistence defeats trickery. The battle continues.

Paul Morley

Pressure Shocks

Dingwalls.

"Bands to be announced! Surprise guests! Food! Late bar! Disco! COME EARLY!"

That's it, the Release Benefit (trouble with the law and the launching of a new bust book) had the air of a college soiree. Camden's socialites tripped the light fantastic and took out an extension on social consciences, rusty through inactivity these past nine years.

George Melly, the legend in his own time, was there and one was *seen,* as it were. Quite the thing. I skulked in having said goodbye to a fiver at the door and hunted for the food and the "surprise guests". The room was thick with *bon mots* but they were indigestible.

Out front North London's erstwhile radicals frugged chic to chic (roots rock reggae and trendy disco), working off the labours of a hard weekend's browsing in Compendium. C&W band Mindless Pleasures could have qualified as "surprise guests", but I missed them.

Pressure Shocks were headlining. A nice, friendly bunch of Derby lads, they graduated on the soul circuit with a tight, amiably earnest, straight ahead reggae sound, devoid of trappings; and they push a brand of earthy no compromise unity.

They weren't as loose as I've seen them before, sometimes too static. But good causes prevent me coming down on average performances.

The solid middle of their set remains constant: "Police-man", "Blood Money", "C.I.A." — easy targets but justifiable. Musically, Prssure Shocks temper the bad news with catchy refrains, a sinuous double-toned guitar frontage, rhythmic percussion and heady organ lines from their splendidly stolid keyboardist.

The guys look the part too, relaxed, having a good time, righteous but not self-righteous.

With "Hellfire" and "Rock Back" there was nothing startlingly innovative; instead they were sometimes sore on reggae cliches, but that ain't the point. Maybe a lot of black bands are running the 60's mellow riffs again, yet it isn't a

THE PUBLISHERS REGRET THAT SOME ADVERTISEMENTS IN THIS ISSUE HAVE HAD TO BE OMITTED

tired movie; just one the whites are too scared to show.

"Fight For All Your Rights" Pressure Shocks tell you one time. You'd best believe at least some of their message. Now is the winter of our discontent. Pressure shocks and someday it has to be released.

Max Bell

Danny & The Juniors

Royalty Ballroom

A two-tone '59 Zephyr nestled alonside a big pre-Kennedy Pontiac. Red neon stressed the high usage of Brylcream. "Drums-a-Go-go" spilled into the night, a brace of satin-frocked pelvises paraded in the foyer.

Edwardians from Enfield to Egham had converged to acknowledge a legend-in-the-flesh.

Danny And The Juniors, factfiends, are Philadelphian, 40-ish and fairly famous for their '50s originals "At The Hop" and "Rock'n'Roll Is Here To Stay". For a few years their heart-throb appeal was coast to coast, but subsequently their musical career became comfortably wall to wall.

They plunged into obscurity, disbanded in '63, and were resurrected just the other night in Tedsville N.14.

They looked great! Eye-Dewed, Harmony-sprayed, Gucci-shod and concertedly elderly, they might have been atom-beamed direct from a Vegas cabaret.

As a musical act, they defy in-depth appraisal. With unflinching professionalism, Messrs Carlucci, Misei, and Terranova honeycrooned and glee-clubbed through a lost era of doo-wop, schmaltz and high-school memorabilia.

Their songs were the hallowed hits of Chubby Checker, The Four Seasons, Frankie Lymon, The Platters and themselves, spattered with a host of mayonnaised medleys plucked from the primeval period when irate citizens could smash a free Presley single with every five gallons of gas purchased.

Twenty years on, Danny and the Juniors proved to be still capable of conjuring the irreverent magic of the Hop.

Backed by Zigger Zagger, a Limey combo who kept the beat and the feel in immaculate rockabilly rollerball fashion, they spiced their act with healthy dollops of panache and self-deflating comedy, giving impromtu dance demonstrations and swapping hairdressing hints with the Teds. For their rendition of Paul Anka's atrocity "You're Having My Baby", they donned Mothercare smocks and stuffed cushions down their frilly saffron shirts.

It was rock'n'roll, sho 'nuff; authentic, one-dimensional and stylish to a tee. But their appeal was essentially that of three hep uncles, who dropped by to serenade their most faithful nephews and nieces, one hand open, one eye closed, out of the side of their mouths.

It charmed the drainpipes off us.

Rick Joseph

Straight 8

Fulham Greyhound

Rick Cassman, vocalist, guitarist and leader of Straight 8, is the man possessed of a punchy prose style who wrote the band's promo sheet.

He describes himself as "a gnome-like whimsical character", and his drummer Rod Berriedale-Johnson as "a prima donna, an angel in women's clothing, a pouff, a wanker." His bassist, Steve 'Snapper' Cherry, has "a simple brain and a Luton transit", and his lead guitarist, 'Boot' Kingsman, he claims has "no charima, no habit forming drug afflictions, and part ownership of a woodyard in Acton".

This much is true.

Last October found the band releasing a debut single on Pete Townshend's Eel Pie label. '79 finds them supposedly on the brink of stardom.

On the evidence of the band in action, this is where I draw the line. Straight 8 are a pub-circuit dance band of adequate, if eventually tedious, flair; no less, and certainly no more.

The set divides thinly between medium-rare boogie rock and heavy-duty stomp; neither of which can claim to inspire.

Light relief comes with "Angel", which isn't helped by a dragging downbeat and lyrics like *"You said you came from Heaven — I think you came from Hell"*. It's hardly a worthwhile cause for debate. "Cocaine" raises its ragged head, a Clapton/Cale compromise, but it's drawn out with a flatness that wrecks the dynamics of the whole song.

Whatever their potential, it's all diffused by their air of detachment, and the drab guise of their minimal chording. Rather than mess with any distinct interchange, the rhythm section just roots for a uniform cruising beat. Cassman evinces enough stage presence to compensate for a selfless vocal, and then blows it by referring to his audience as "peasants".

Less acceptable still is some genuinely fierce guitar work by Boot on the muscle-bound "Heartbreaker". So where was he in the rest of the set?

I suspect there are pub-rockers in large supply who'd subscribe to Straight 8. I also suspect there's a music world who could well live without them.

Mark Ellen

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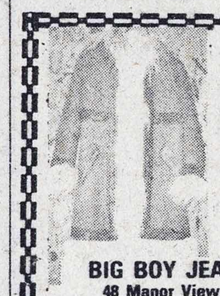

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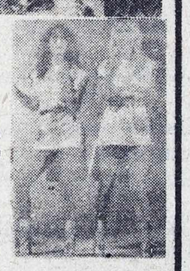

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Buzzcocks
The Teardrops

Manchester

Two alternatives to giantism.

To read the critical flak about the last tour you'd think Buzzcocks were dead and buried. Not so.

If the lather surrounding the band hadn't been so ridiculously overstated in the first place, and if droves of people hadn't taken to Buzzcock's self-effacing, cuddly safe identity, then perhaps the band would never have found themselves touring large impersonal halls totally unsuited to their limited presence and subtle charms.

Anyway, I'm not aware that post-Devoto Buzzcocks have ever claimed to be much more than just a pop group; and pop groups have their limitations.

The first option was described as "The Annual Polytechnic Word-of-Mouth Charity Gig" for Shades, a local counselling service.

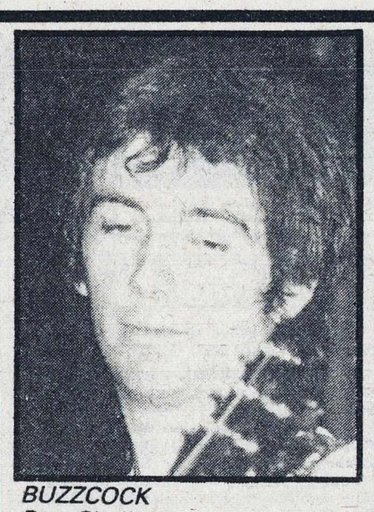
Beneath the appropriately gnashing backdrop of Dennis the Menace, 'Cocks turned in their most enjoyable performance in Manchester since the very early days. Familiar selections "I Don't Mind", "Fast Cars" and "Ever Fallen In Love" were performed crisply, unadorned. There were no tedious guitar solos; no Pink Floydesque drum routines.

The disciplined tonal chaos of "Noise Annoys" showed Buzzcocks really have improved; distorted versions of "Whatever Happened To" and "Friends of Mine" (numbers long out of their standard set) indicated just how and why.

It was fast, rough, vibrant fun. I became a fan again.

Option two was a spin-off at the Factory.

The Teardrops sounded promising, featuring Steve Garvey on bass, recent departure from The Fall, Karl Burns on drums, and hopefully a sprinkling of local names. Despite a massed



BUZZCOCK
Pete Shelley
Pic. GUS STEWART

display of Foster Grants, the only even marginally known 'face' seemed to be The Fall's short-lived bass player, Eric.

But The Teardrops were a mess.

Playing stuff culled from their current one-off EP ("In And Out Of Fashion"), the Gary Glitter parody (I think) "Leave Me No Choice" raised a smile. When the rest, The Teardrops proved that young white cats can't play the blues but can certainly give you them.

I think it was meant to be a joke. Am I laughing?

Ian Wood

The Raincoats
Dresden Banks
Vincent Units

Acklam Hall

Vincent Units, first on, topped their version of "Gloria" — perhaps the best I've heard recently — with an original composition called "I Wouldn't Let You Fuck My Dog".

The 'new' (claimed the poster) Raincoats have a great violinist. A 'new' new New Wave band?

Dresden Banks played last and their singer sported the worst-looking pair of trousers I've seen this side of Fred Frith.

This was a good place to start 1979; an evening of comedy, parody, high anti-fashion calm, fun, radical rockers and pop feminism a-go-go.

Present were members of Rough Trade, Slits, Scrits, prag VEC and nobody at all trendy until Mick Jones turned up. The venue was friendly, didn't make you feel obliged to do anything, the disco did (dance!); and the three groups swapped members as though ego didn't play a part. The music was intimidating in all the right ways.

Vincent Units had been struck with flu, and so quickly drafted in girl friends from The Raincoats and Dresden Banks. The singer from the Raincoats played blushing bass, and the bass player from Dresden Banks wore a long coat, sat swinging on an office stool and contributed vocals and visuals: neither brash nor nervous, extreme or inverted. She didn't move, she didn't need to.

They proved rock can be FUN without its old myths. Units' sound had been made up at the last moment and was reminiscent of Pere Ubu first and Big In Japan last, with Funkadelic, Lee Perry and Steve Beresford in between.

I can't remember anything about the Raincoats because I was hypnotised. It was so good, refreshing and challenging to have an all-girl group up there, playing music and not male-comforting roles. So *important*. Ex-Slit Palm Olive plays drums, although I don't know who else is in the group. But there's four of them (drums, guitar, violin, bass).

Dresden Banks dish out much more *instant* rock embroideries and so I'm not altogether sure about them. Keyboards guitar, drums (males), bass (female), sax (sometimes) and dancing, with the vocals up for grabs, the mood was distinctly sinful-rockabilly-be-bop-dread, beat.

I didn't like the sax player's ego. I liked the bass player's red eyes and I'd like to see them again.

Ian Penman

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Hip Difficult Listening. . .

Terry Reid

The Venue

If Ken Russell wanted to remake *Night Of The Living Dead,* he might choose the Venue as a location.

When you enter this cavernous canteen you're awestruck by its grossness, mousetrap ambience, overkill disco and gutbucket bouncers. This is my first visit, and it's obviously pointless having a concert which most of the audience have to suffer with their backs to the stage, amid the din, fart, and clatter of 500 foodfiends.

On a lightning visit to London, after six gear years in the Blue-Sunshine State, where 'New Wave' means a brand of organic deodorant for surfers, please give a big hand for TERRY REID!

Who?

Well, he used to do warm-ups for the Swinging Stones in the Rolling Sixties, enriched his pedigree through associations with Cream, Small Faces, The Walker Bros and The Beach Boys, and cut some allegedly classic vinyl. Tonight he's the entree between the onion soup and the peach melba, backed by the workmanlike trio Doug Rodriguez (guitar), John Siomos (drums), and Chris Stowar (bass).

Their set is a badly-mixed, paraplegically-paced onslaught of West-Coast 'Jock Rock, fraught with sub-Eagles powerchord progressions, giddy arpeggios, and a few whining acoustic endeavours: otherwise known as Hip Difficult Listening. Their repertoire is divided into nondescript Reid originals, unexhilarating cover versions, tuning an impressive armoury of spare guitars, and glib chat about lovely California.

I could learn to love this hyper-strained megarock if I was an ozone 'n' grass addled Malibu Beach bogey, or a music starved middle-roader with a bad case of nostalgia.

But when I hear great songs like "Walk Away Renee" and "I Used To Love Her" arrogantly heavy-metalled beyond recognition, and such classics as "Then He Kissed Me" and "All I Have To Do Is Dream" done like a death march, I'd rather learn Swahili.

Rick Joseph

Ludus
Crass

Manchester

Up at the Factory, there's new rock for anybody: the dry Crass, the bleary Poison Girls and the mysterious, sensuous Ludus.

The theatrical agitators Crass (excitably featured in last week's *Thrills)* line up five in a row, dressed in black, adopting a gloomy, unglamorous and intermittently effective mode of provocative menace. Their visual uniformity is not so much fascistic as deliberately disconcerting in an exaggerated, theatrical way.

Their music is as equally colourless and stern.

A quintet, their two guitar-based rock is a flexible elaboration of the passionless, determined Ramones discharge; sloppier and more uneven. But their pretensions are earnestly harder and less awed than the fake brothers' particular muddled concentration. Accordingly, the music is uglier and more parched, while retaining that essential pace and punch.

It's the dark, drastic side of farce.

The music's relentless monochromatic monotony, its spasmodic chaos and mangled calm, dilute their bruising threat; and the inevitable incoherence of their gratuitously jolting, jagged lyrics means their impact is minimal, their after effect weak.

It's sharp music of fiction and friction that requires too much concentration to fully appreciate. Consequently, you'll probably find them drab or distant. Being a pervert I found them delightful, though certainly not disgusting, as some think, and definitely not as demanding and dramatic as they need to be to 'succeed'.

They have admirable ideals and plenty of juicy contradictions to discuss. But are they academic, groovy, boring, mock-nihilistic, tortuous or what? Perhaps they're just plain people playing roles with a shade more consistent concern than The Clash and less control over content than The Fall.

In contrast, the Poison Girls' songs, generally five times longer than Crass' swift blasts, have more obvious musical detail, but less irregular, natural magnetism.

Their drowsy rock plods instead of bites, thuds instead of thrashes, and meanders through moderately epileptic, intense updates of the rock jam. They lack the thrust, edge and edginess new rock relies on for its basic freshness.

There is also a distinct lack of economy and urgency; and they are led by a bulky middle-aged woman forced into red satin skirt which gives the quartet a visual incongruity. But the Poison Girls are very ordinary.

Ludus are anything but ordinary.

A rich, bewitching quartet, led by the enigmatic Linder, whose maturing, enchanting voice adds layers of mystery, fragility and haunting strength to the esoteric music. This is

LINDA LUDUS. Pic. JOE BARRY

shaped by Arthur's authoritative and sensitive guitar: using Wilko's frenetic rhythm whisk as a bare base, he effortlessly conjures a wide range of alarming, precise sounds that both clash with and complement Linder's proudly articulated vocal extremes.

It's this volatile, versatile relationship that is the essence of Ludus' dark, deceptive sound. Arthur supplies the solids, Linder the shadows; Arthur the rain, Linder the wind. It's a classic combination.

The reliable rhythm section (Toby, drums; Wilby, bass) devise an industrious and energetic framework, the plainness of which healthily halts any pointless ornamentation. They deftly discipline Arthur and Linder's wildness.

The overall mixture is that of a precious dance music: Gothic, but not glossily so, like Magazine; impressionistic *and* expressionistic; compact and exuberant. It's music that chills and warms, with images that scare and comfort.

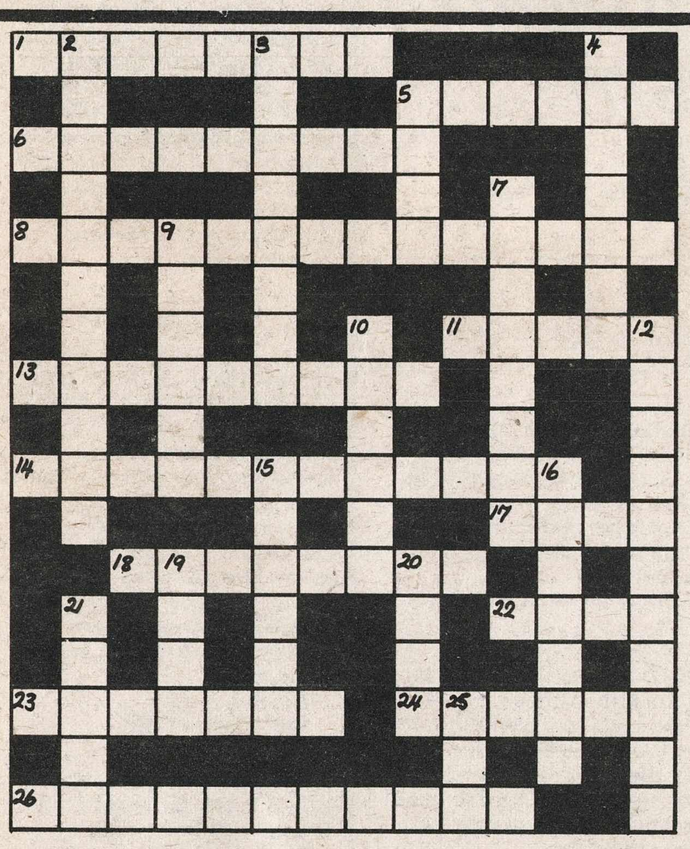
Separate songs are definite and elegant. They rush, twist, stalk; sculptured by Arthur, set by Willy and Toby, with Linder's fragile, eery and commanding vocals flowing right inside, or snapping outside the structures. Hooks are unusual but fluent, structures are substantial and imaginative but not complex.

"Bleeding" is as massive in its own way as "Shot By Both Sides" and "Ambition", with that kind of atmosphere, ambiguity and pulse.

Ludus are special. They're discovering new space and texture. Still young, still unsure on stage, their music is already alone and knowing. And they're getting better all the time.

Take good care of them.

Paul Morley



ACROSS

1 Eric's lost his bottle, by the sound of it
5 See 26
6 Chronologically, falls between "More" and "Atom Heart Mother"
8 Arty punk combo led by Eve's old man (4,3,3,4)
11 Jazzer involved in attempt to name L. Lydon's namesake!
13 Housewives' Corner: Singer who sounds like he could be useful for cleaning greasy pans!
14 This one Dr. Baarnard should handle with the utmost care *(think about it!)* (5,2,5)
17 Bizterm for excessive publicity from shaky base
18 Multi-hit combo from the Golden Age of R&B, U.S. black division
22 A fantasy distillation of a peculiarly American reality — the NME Book Of Modern Music said that
23 Sorry, Father Christmas not available — will this buncha W. Coast bozos do instead!
24 Are thankful for the presence of Lady Soul!
26 & 5 across They may have had only one hit, but "Something In The Air" was a memorable one for all that

DOWN

2 Enlist with Elvis, join The Professionals! (5,6)
3 ECC LP from Jean Michel Jarre
4 To recap: I told you the label already!
5 Emmigrant wimp sounds at home in Nashville!
7 Bake shut . . . erh . . . beat husk . . . erh . . . teak hubs . . . I'm confused! (4,4)
9 The first bit sounds too much of a gamble — we'll play safe with surname only!
10 Heavy metal squawkers — personally, we'd set the cat on 'em!
12 Carly Simon's chart song to an anonymous egotist (5,2,4)
15 Kai's a singer, Nigel was Elton John's drummer
16 The former Mrs. Stevie Wonder — hubby produced two albums for her
19 Initially Boring Bob's TV gig
20 Sorta piece of, like, Indian music, like wot that Ravi geezer does
21 Punksters in a continual state of conflict!
25 Label you might discover in your car!

ACROSS: 1 Them; 3 (Ray) Charles; 7 Howard Devoto; 9 "Come On"; 10 (Bill) Nelson; 12 "Shaved Fish"; 15 (Janis) Ian (Anderson); 16 Robert Plant; 17 Ray (Charles); 18 "Power In The (Darkness)"; 19 Roy Orbison; 20 Track; 21 Salsa.

DOWN: 1 "Two (Virgins)"; 2 "Mirrors"; 3 (Commander) Cody; 4 Alvin Lee; 5 Little Feat; 6 John (Cooper Clarke); 8 "(Honky Tonk) Woman"; 9 (John) Cooper Clarke; 11 Carl Perkins; 13 "Honky Tonk (Woman)"; 14 The Motors; 15 & 17 "Instant Replay".

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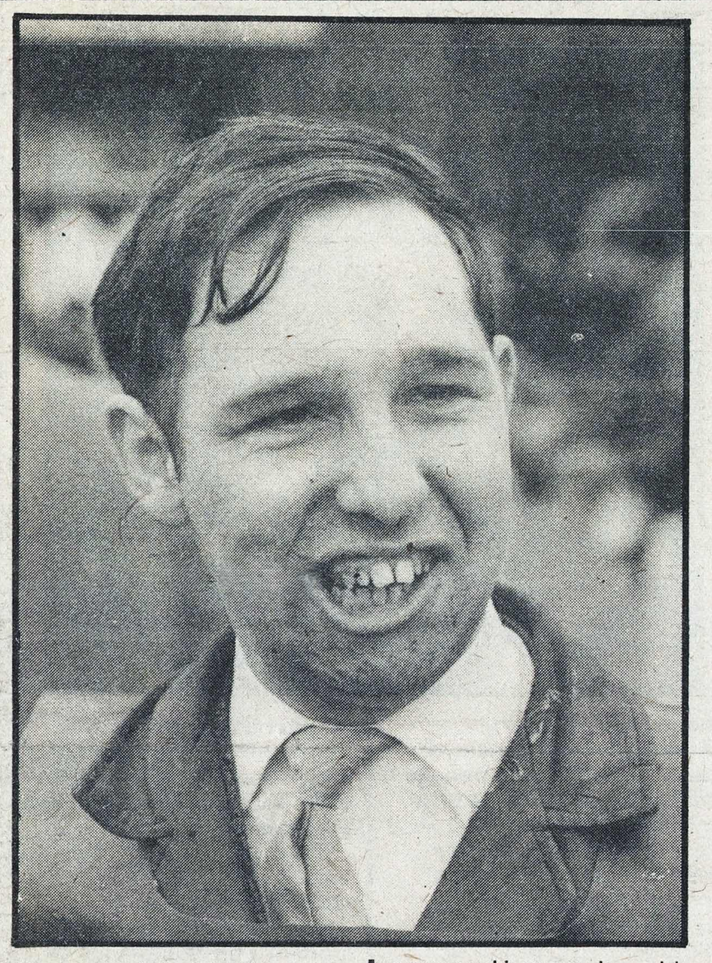


Hello! I'm a Philosopher, and by means of intensive Socratic dialogues, I've arrived at a pseudo-conclusion, to wit, that we philosophers are long overdue on our very own . . .

Heads down, no-nonsense, Neo-Structuralist Bag

When examining the phenomenon designated by the term 'Ian Penman' it should be realised that an attempt is being made to parody the functions, modes and, very probably, also to question the reality (if one can use such an indeterminate, ambiguous label, open as it is to connotations of actual decisiveness on the part of such an axiomatic usage) that such a designation will inevitably entail. Such a designation pre-supposes that the term 'writer' exists as a definable entity which may allow itself to be operated on by the function of 'parody' and because such a pre-supposition cannot be made without recourse to structuralist and linguistic approaches to the problem (the problem of disentangling the notion 'parody' from 'irony' and attendant connected possible definitions such as 'satire' or even 'stupidity' merely enters the entire sphere of the separation of 'definitions'), these approaches themselves open to doubt as valid means of making even primary inroads towards the ultimate 'naming' process, disregard of them as effective tools of perceptive action may come into play leaving one in the position of having to take the term as something 'given', a method which may find little favour amongst the more rigorous in outlook but forcing itself to be adapted if even the initial steps are to be taken in conceptualizing the entities underlying them and utilizing them in an effective manner.

The narrow limits, the 'labelling' process if you like, of such naming merely reduces the nearly infinite variety of choices that could expand the range of possibilities and potentialities of the subject, often cementing it to a singular, inadequate definition that may negate as much as it asserts the 'true' (an indefinite word again, I know, but take it as a projection opposed to the term 'false' and we are moving in roughly the same latitudes of semantics) nature of the term and in such a case the reader would do well to bear in mind that usage of the original term does not finally deny the possibility of other more accurate, meanings accruing to the object under discussion. 'Penman' when handled under the term 'writer' will naturally produce certain concrete images as a reflex in the reader who will attach the functions and societally ascertained images of all such a designation entails from his store bank of 'agreed' images to the term. More liberal and questioning readers will not allow such conventional interpretations of the label to disallow the fact that it could mean something quite alien to these societally approved images. It could mean for instance 'SOMEBODY talking through his ARSE . . .'

G. HAYES (no structural or semantic address implied or given)

P.S. Thank God for Danny Baker!

We presume Penman is using the royal WE when he says; "thus, finally, we don't know what it is we are talking about".

Reduce Structuralism to "what we signify is a function of how we signify it"?? Fuck it — go ahead and tell your readers that Lacan wrote "It aint what you do/It's the way that you do it". As for "Simply all we can say is determined by what we can assess or measure with our faculties or our instruments" — well, that is simple alright — Skinner might have written it, Levi Strauss never.

I'll assume that a Situationalist is a misprunt. Otherwise, Ian, I tend to agree — I'm sure that Throbbing Gristle's new record is just as objectionable as the rest — it's just that your signified outweighs your signifiers. This bit about performance art though (bear with me music fans — he brought it up) — I think you miss the point — do you read the comic versions or what?

DAVID TOOP (no fixed abode)

It's the "or what?" that gets me — CSM

Aesthetically speaking, as a Structuralist and in such a way as to maximize minimalisations (easier done than said), I'd like to blast open the Ian Penman backlash as a function to signify the appalling incomprehensibility of his verbal diarrhoea.

PUBLIC MENACE (no address given)

Right on, sytems! Have you jokers no shame? Go pick on someone your own size, you big bad orthodox positivists! — CSM

Can I be the first person to start the "Pursey's Package" backlash? On Sat, 13th Jan, me and my mates went to Peterborough to see the Angelic Upstarts/Invaders only to be told that the gig was in Manchester at The Venue. I want to know why the big Sham advertised this gig in P'boro thus disappointing many punks. We had a very depressing drive back to Kings Lynn that day. Thanks to Jimmy Pursey.

MOULDY, SNOT, SCAB AND NASTY (A very pissed-off group called GOVERNMENT ISSUE), Kings Lynn

Another day, another backlash — CSM

To Ian Penman,

Having deciphered as much of the intellectual bullshit/excuse for an album review as is possible I have some important points to raise.

a) Throbbing Gristle have no political stance whatsoever. To imply they are among your crowd of "dilletantish cum entrepeneural figures" is small-minded and incorrect.

b) TG do not set out to shock. They merely observe and provide impressions of what they see, using sound as a medium. Whether or not this is shocking is up to the individual to decide. We all have our definitions for 'obscenity'.

c) The paragraph on performance art is irrelevant. The ICA 'Tampon' exhibition was not the work of TG but of 'Coum Transmissions', a performance art vehicle whose members include Genesis P. and Cosey Fanni Tutti. As far as they are concerned TG and CT are entirely different projects.

d) I presume your piece of writing was supposed to be an album review. I suggest you find another outlet for your stupid pseudo-intellectual comments on the structure and motives of contemporary rock music. There is no mention of the contents of DOA whatsoever. As to the group line-up one is left in the dark. My conclusion? Nought review!

G. RUSHTON (no address given)

Is it too late to start a George Formby backlash?

ENID AMIN, Uganda Lane, Glasgow.

I repeat: another day, another backlash — CSM

Punk died when Patrik Fitzgerald signed for Polydor.

EDDIE GRUBB, Rugby.

Some of the best rock'n'roll has been created in Southern California in general and Hollywood/Los Angeles in particular. From Phil Spector's productions at Gold Star Studios, such as "Uptown" and "He's A Rebel", through all The Beach Boys records, via The Doors, Love, Byrds and so forth, right up to the present crop of new artists like Dyan Diamond, The Pop!, any amount of others . . . and (of course) The Runaways.

Perceptive writers like Julie Burchill have for some time recognized the fact, in the face of much fashion-orientated prejudice, that The Runaways are a fine group of rock'n'rollers; flawed, maybe, but the smarter folks among us (Parsons/Burchill in particular) realise that any defects in the band have little to do with them coming from L.A. or being teenage girls when they started out.

Your Ian Penman, an intelligent person for sure, seems unable to grasp this. In his review of the girls' new album in last week's *NME* he fell victim to all the tired old myths about California, with all his silly implications about the brain power of those who live there.

Has Penman ever *been* to California? I doubt it. Does Penman actually *like* any rock'n'roll music (and I don't mean Wigwam or Can?)? Again, I doubt it. If Ian hates the whole punkoid/romanticism schtick so much, why doesn't he just stick to reviewing ECM albums or interviewing

So OUT go Backlashers, Quo fans, and sensible letters editors. . . IN come Post-Spinozoid Rationalism and CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY

Weather Report?

You see, non-intellectualised rock doesn't imply stupidity on the part of either the player or the listener. I have friends in L.A. pop groups whose IQs could easily blow Penman away with one flex of the cerebral cortex; and hasn't R. Meltzer glorified the metaphysical joys of 'Papa Oom Mow Mow'? But incomprehensible though Ian's writing is, he ain't as smart as he would like us to think: he steals many of his words and phrases from the artsy-fartsy books he's always carrying around with him (he told me this a few months back).

A final note about L.A. . . . Most of the real offensive people are actually out-of-town carpetbagger-rockers, like Ronstadt & Eagles, who simply moved there because it's the centre of the music biz in the US. Oh, Ian, you may indeed be a "teenager", but you certainly aren't "teenage". And there is, after all, a subtle difference. Love it or leave it alone.

SANDY ROBERTSON, Sounds, London WC2

Hey, Neil — does this geezer want a job or what? — CSM

Just thought I'd drop a note. Damn, dropped it again! I like *Lord Of The Rings*, Afghans, Genesis and Barclay James Harvest. Does this make me last year's thing.

PETE THE HAPPY HIPPY WITH FLOWERS IN HIS HAIR, Derby.

P.S. If you don't print this I'll go and strangle a couple of Elvis Costello fans.

How about starting with these two? — CSM

At the Elvis Costello gig at Derby Assembly rooms (6th Jan) I was utterly disgusted and dismayed at the over-reaction of the bouncers whose presence was anything but low profile. They continually harassed the kids for standing, dancing and trying to take pictures. I tried to take pictures myself to be told that" Elvis does not wish to have his photo taken". What right has he to censor my actions? I can uh.. understand 'no flash' — but this?

I was disturbed to read of Jill Furmanovsky's experience at the Public Image gig *(NME T-Zers* 6th Jan). Why should only an elite be allowed freedom of expression? I'm not a ligger, I paid £3 to get in and was treated like dirt. So were the kids.

The promoter just laughed in my face when I questioned him about it . . .

How can Elvis sing the songs he does — when *right under his nose* these things are going on . . ?

I'd like to think Elvis doesn't know what's going on — if he does (and doesn't do anything) the conclusion is a frightening one — the music was so good.

That's what hurt . .

The reality was before our eyes.

TONY FISHER, Derbyshire.

Just a line to tell you that Elvis Costello is King and is alive and well and protecting the kids from the bouncers at the Ipswich gig on Thursday 4th. Pump it up Elvis!

KILLS ALL KNOWN GERMS DEAD (I think).

Doo-wop-shoo-be-do, do-wop do-wah do-wah aeea . . . Oh yeah (baby).

Dig It!

THE MAGIC FLUTE, Essex.

Bomp-a-bomp-a-bomp -a-bomp-bomp-a-dang-a-dang-a-dang-dang . . . so what else is new? — CSM.

Whatever happened to the smart arse one liner?

KILGORE TROUT (Rhythm Guitar in Slaughterhouse 5)

See next letter. — CSM

I have no arms and legs but I always enjoy reading the front page of your magazine.

ENDO, Stafford.

P.S. My mum wrote this for me.

***That's* what happened to the smart-ass one liner. — CSM**

I have been reading you a lot lately, and I think those people who pull their hair out when their group is slagged off by you are wasting energy. Surprise, surprise you journalists differ. For instance lately Clash, Jam etc. I would rather a "talking" paper like yours than a morgue like *Rolling Stone.* And anyway I (and many more) beg to disagree by buying records in large numbers, which you have laughed off. Final point. you are right not to treat stars like Gods (a nasty tendency I think these days) but I think you should give all groups the benefit of a doubt. They may be bad but are they sincere?

INARTICULATE, KENT.

P.S. Mind you sometimes I could scream.

In your NME last week I saw the name "MEKONS" printed at least 14 times. Wot's going on? Are they supposed to be hip? Is this the new thing? If they're so good now, how come they never used to get a write up in June/July? I bought their single when it came out and I thought it was great! Does this make me unhip, just 'cos I like "Riot"? Or am I just an awkward bastard trying to get his letter printed?

NICK A, York.

Probably — CSM

Ref. Nick Kent's piece on Gen X — if pretty girls were out of favour in '78 why didn't Maggie Bell make it instead of Kate Bush, Debbie Harry, Rachel Sweet etc. Hmm?

KATE (no not that one), Weymouth, Dorset.

Now is that nice? — CSM

It certainly isn't — MAGGIE BELL

Who said Rachel Sweet was pretty? — NICK KENT

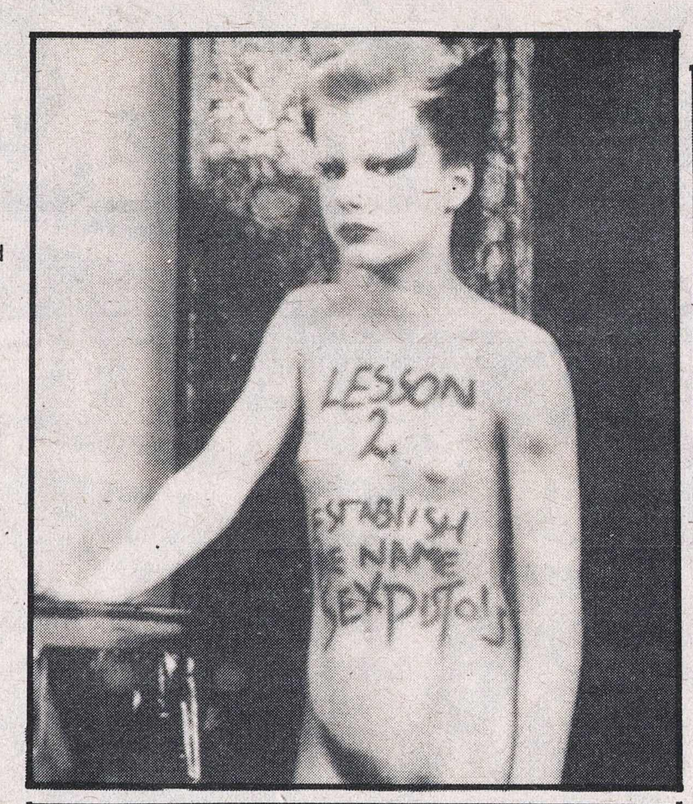
So Tony James could never be in a band with a fat guy, eh? Bet he's never had a fab, fat girlfriend either. It must be hell for him, existing in a world where he's surrounded by millions of ordinary, plain unbeautiful people. In last week's interview, he showed that he entertains the most sickening, snobbish and self-centred kind of discrimination, not to mention vanity. We want to see Crocus Behemoth or Meatloaf (both of whom are infinitely superior rock musicians) fight him live on stage at a suitable London venue. Or even Poly Styrene. (He should be so lucky!)

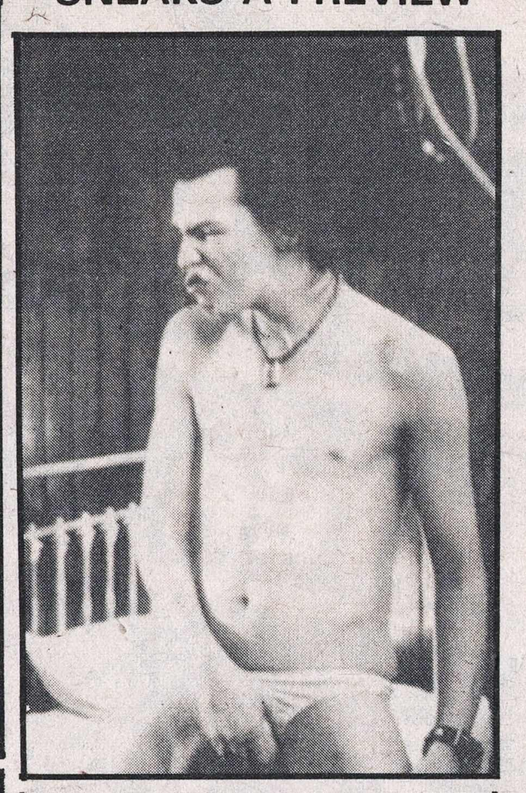
BROCKLEY BALDPUNK AND THE FAB FAT GROOVERS (no address given, but probably somewhere quite large)

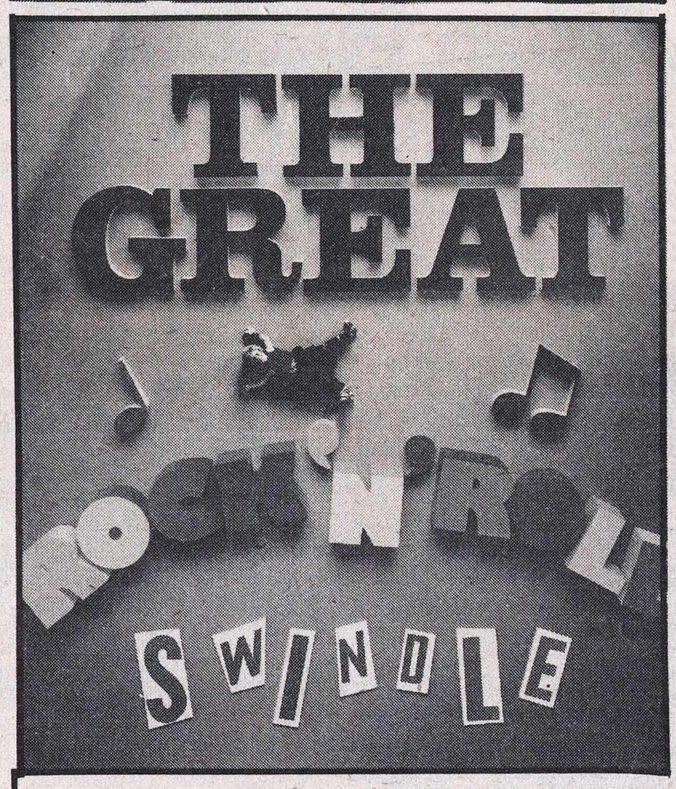
Since reading your letter I have lost 35 pounds. Unfortunately, my weight has remained constant. I suggest you kidnap Tony James and collectively sit on his face. — CSM

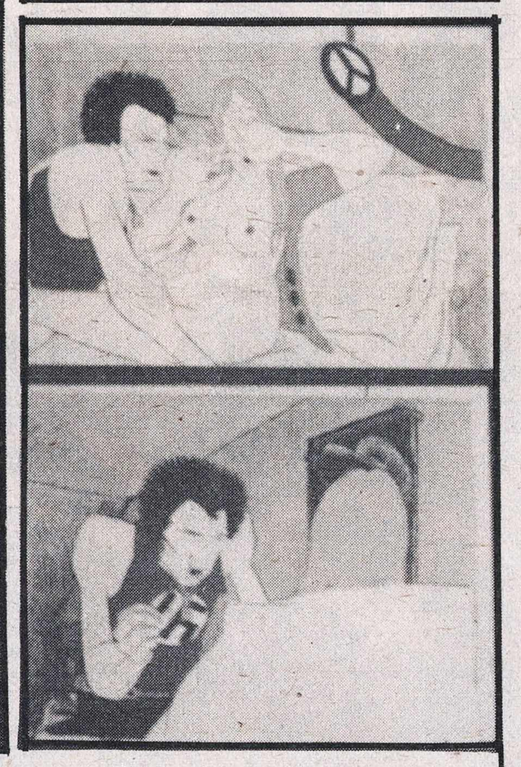
T-ZERS

SNEAKS A PREVIEW









WHAT WE HAVE HERE is the first proof that "The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle" actually exists, in album form at least. This is the sleeve (above, left).

Whether it will be the finished version is anyone's guess, because Malcolm McLaren hasn't apparently made up his mind on a final running order. Already a previous batch of 75,000 sleeves has had to be scrapped, and this batch of 250,000 may yet meet the same fate.

One thing is for certain: Malcolm is about to make his singing debut. The track listing we've got, with vocalists in brackets, is as follows:

Side 1: "The God Save The Queen Symphony"; "Rock Around The Clock" (sung by Ten Pole Tudor, whatever that may be); Johnny B. Goode (Johnny Rotten); "Road Runner" (Rotten); "Black Arabs" (Black Arabs); "Whatcha Gonna Do About It" (Rotten); "Who Killed Bambi" (Ten Pole Tudor).

Side 2: "Silly Thing" (Paul Cook); "Substitute", "No Lip" and "Stepping Stone" (all Rotten); "Lonely Boy" (Steve Jones); "Something Else" (Sid Vicious).

Side 3: "Anarche Pour Le UK" (Jerzimy); "Belsen Was A Gas" (title in German, versions by both Rotten and Ronnie Biggs); "No One Is Innocent" (Biggs); "My Way" (Vicious).

Side 4: "C'Mon Everybody" (Vicious); "EMI" (Jones); "The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle" (The Sex Pistols); "You Need Hands" (Malcolm McLaren); "Friggin' In The Riggin' " (Jones).

The Rotten tracks date from way back — mostly from Dave Goodman sessions and warm-ups. Other points: Black Arabs are Bernie Rhodes' black punk disco band, "EMI" appears to be an 'orchestral' version, and not all the songs from the film are included.

It all comes packaged in a Jamie Reid gatefold sleeve with just the title and Malcolm's dwarf friend on the front. On the back there's the dead deer scene left over from the aborted Who Killed Bambi? Russ Meyer movie. Inside there's a collage of movie excerpts: Sid in his underpants, Malcolm in a bondage kilt, Biggs and Co on the beach, plus some cartoon frames of Sid filming a porn movie. There's also pix of a couple of McLaren's "Ten Easy Lessons" in perpetrating the swindle (as previously explained in Thrills) *— including the obligatory outrage shot: a pubescent punkette, naked, daubed with the words "Lesson 2 - Establish the name Sex Pistols".*

But our favourite bit comes up in the right-hand corner, where it announces: "The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle Courtesy Of EMI, A&M, Virgin, Barclay, Warner Brothers, Nippon Columbia, Sex Pistols." In the meantime McLaren is prevaricating so much it looks as if we may have to wait till March to either hear or see his masterwork. He always was a bashful chap ...

Ah, Paris! City of lights, the cradle of civilisation, home of the famous philosophers, centre of fashion, capital of cuisine, mecca for devotees of horrible toilets and long thin loaves of bread. Cue stock shot of the Eiffel Tower at night, cue accordian music, cue **Thin Lizzy** hard at work on their next studio elpee, provisionally entitled "Black Rose".

Under the direction of producer **Tony Visconti,** Messrs **Lynott, Moore, Downey** and **Gorham** are ensconced in EMI's Paris studio — where the **Stones** cut "Some Girls", if that's any recommendation — and the first fruits of their labours will be a single, "Waiting For An Alibi"/"With Love", which should be coming at you in mid-Feb. The album, launched with all the appropriate pomp and circumstance amidst the sound and fury of a British tour, should be released in late March. All clear?

Well, tiny cabbages, the Lizzies are apparently enjoying themselves hugely in Paris. Despite the fact that they've never enjoyed huge (or even perceptible) sales and popularity across the water, they are basking in the prestige of the reflected glory accrued by their **Greedy Bastards** association with Messrs **Paul Cook** and **Steve Jones.** "We've just been groovin' around and takin' over the town," murmured Philip jovially when a *T-zer* appeared on the other end of his telephone the other day.

Slightly less jovial was our Phil when espied by viewers of the daily angling programme *Thames At Six* last Wednesday. In fact, the gangling earringed bassist was seen landing one (a punch, not a fish) on spindly, epicene **Allan Jones** (a journalist in the employ of *Monotony Maker*) during the course of footage filmed at a promo party held by MCA Records to launch Lizzy guitarslammer **Gary Moore**'s "Back In The Streets" solo album. Apparently, the young sod had been insulting the Ould Sod *(This means making allegedly anti-Oirish remarks, bedad — Celtic semantics Ed)* and so an extravagantly juiced Lynott ("I'd been on the piss since lunchtime and I was just a bit smashed") let him have it. Our leprechaun in the grass reports that Lynott's temper snapped when he excitedly accused Jones of insulting his race and was met with the retort "The Irish or the darkies?". Must've made enthralling viewing, but what we really want to know is where was **Bob Geldof** while all this was going on? . . .

There's too damn much violence in rock and roll already, already, and — according to a snappy snippet in the *News Of The World* — there's going to be considerably more if **Sid Vicious** gets out of jail. "I want to take karate lessons so I can defend myself. I'm getting sick of people picking on me and beating me up. There's a few geezers I've got to get even with when I get around to it, and one of them is **Johnny Rotten,** that boring . . ."

Thank you, Sid, and we're sure your remarks will go a long way towards supporting all those claims that you're not a violent lad. Incidentally, Sid claims that it's "when" he gets out, not "if" since "they'll have to let me go since they know that I didn't kill **Nancy.** They'd never give me bail if they had a strong case". Sid is currently out on $30,000 bail on condition that he avoids night clubs. This condition was imposed after he put **Patti Smith**'s brother **Todd** in hospital after a disco brawl. "He (Rotten) will see who'll sell the most records when this trial is over and it won't be him. I'm the only one of the **Sex Pistols** left. I was always more famous than any of them. They just didn't have any bottle". . .

Lou Reed and **Nils Lofgren** are allegedly cooperating on a yet-unspecified project, yet. On the subject of his "Take No Prisoners" live double album, Loopy Lou was recently quoted as follows: "I don't think that people who listen to rock and roll for a minute think that the guy who's making music or singing is as hip as they are. One of the reasons I put out 'Take No Prisoners' is to let 'em know I'm as hip as they are — and maybe just a little bit more!" We shudder to think how unhip the people who listen to Lou Reed's records must be, in that case . . .

This week's sluice on **Bruce:** the amount of bootlegging surrounding N.J.'s fave sprog is the heaviest since the halcyon **Dylan** days. Following the success of "The Fever"/"Santa Claus Is Coming To Town", three more illicit singles have surfaced: "Because The Night", "Fire"/"Raise Your Hand" and "Point Blank". On the subject of "Because The Night", it wasn't quite the amicable New Jersey summit meeting collaboration of popular supposition. What our paid informers inform us happened is that **Jimmy Iovine** (Springsteen's engineer, Smith's producer) slipped La Pat a rough demo of the song without consulting Bruce, who was not a little put out by the outcome . . .

No jokers please: **Dr Feelgood** have purchased a Spanish pig farm (complete with 50 pigs) which they plan to use as a rehearsal studio for their upcoming European tour. The idea for the Docs to go into the meat market (no jokes, especially about **Sparko**'s increasing girth) came when they almost won a pig farm while playing cards with the natives during their Spanish Christmas holidays. Incidentally, the inspiration for the lyric of the current Feelgoods single "Milk And Alcohol" was seeing legendary Detroit bluesman **John Lee Hooker** in Los Angeles last year. John Lee was decidedly out to lunch on — you guessed — milk and alcohol *(probable Kahlua Cocktails — Ed),* which is not what **Lee Brilleaux** was swilling when he checked out **Punishment Of Luxury** at the Nashville last week . . .

The Clash are releasing a single of "Capital Radio" (re-recorded specifically to kill the black market trade in copies of *NME*'s 1977 "Capital Radio" E.P., last heard of selling at £40) and the old **Bobby Fuller Four** classic "I Fought The Law".
Only problem is, CBS don't know that — and *they're* putting out a 45 of "English Civil War" on Feb 23. **Nicky Horne** will *not* be appearing on either record. . .

The ascension of Small Wonder Records into the realms of the truly weird and wacky will be affirmed next month when the Walthamstow twistos release their monumental, block-busting 12" EP **"The Fatal Microbes** Meet **The Poison Girls"** (two tracks from each band, natcho) which the label describes as "a real **Peel** job". Meanwhile, The Microbes' lead singer 14-year-old **Honey Babe** (whose legal guardian fronts The Poison Girls) has been temporarily apprehended by the long arm of Borstal, from which organisation she was on the run . . .

Funloving young **Buzzcock Pete Shelley** recorded a bunch of solo easy listening stuff for Manchester's Piccadilly Radio, crooning to a 12-string guitar. The Buzzcocks have never been closer, only splitting four times last week before recording their new single "Everybody's Happy" at Stockport's Strawberry Studios. They threaten a discomix; meanwhile Buzzcocks drummer **John Maher** was "shocked" at being voted top living drummer in the *NME* poll. Next year, this mild-mannered 18-year-old is determined to be top drummer living *or* dead. To achieve this end, he is reportedly taking drum lessons to refine his technique still further . . .

Contract fever: Polydor are toying with an involvement with the **Gang Of Four** and **Human League,** while Step Forward sniff around **Manicured Noise** and Radar Records grab this year's thing, **The Mekons** . . .

Hyperactivity: The Stranglers have now completed their live album (for imminent release) while **Huge Cornball** and **Jean Jacques Burnel** have both completed their solo albums. A Stranglers live concert film is ready for showing, either on TV or on commercial release and they've just started work on their next studio album. We're amazed that J-J even had time to watch that **Doors** film clip on the *Old Wave Mare's Nest* last week, whereupon he noticed a remarkable resemblance between the one-legged dancing of **Jim Morrison** and his own public hoofing. "What can I say? I've got no defence," admitted Burnel to a small *T-zer* squatting on the arm of his chair, "but I swear I've never seen The Doors before. I was jumping up yelling 'Look, he's doing it!' I was amazed!" So were we, J-J. So were we . . .

BETTER BADGES

TOP TEN

This week		Last week
1	PIL	1
2	CLASH POLICE	2
3	THE JAM	5
4	BUZZCOCKS	4
5	SMIRKS AGAINST TRAVOLTA	3
6	LOVE	6
7	BITES	7
8	ALTERNATIVE ULSTER	–
9	X-RAY SPEX	–
10	GANG OF FOUR	–

New Releases

30p Drunk Punk
25p Tapper '76, African Herbsman, What you see it what you are, Gen X45, Rock against Xmas, Merry Wanna.
20p (I want) more rope, Sham 69, Cabaret Voltaire, Prag-Vec, Lightning Raiders, Pink Fairies Love, The Doomed, Spizz Oil, Germ Free, Kraftwerk, Tony Parsons, Julie Burchill, Gauche Siouxsie.

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3rd Floor
5-7 Carnaby Street
London W1V 1PG
Phone: 01-439 8761

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Neil Spencer
Assistant Editor
Phil McNeill
News Editor
Derek Johnson
Production Editor
Jack Scott
Special Projects Editor
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Associate Editors
Charles Shaar Murray
Monty Smith
Staff
Tony Stewart
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Ian Penman
Andy Gill
Research
Fiona Foulger
New York:
Joe Stevens
N.Y. 254 6840
ADVERTISEMENT DEPT.
Room 2529
Kings Reach Tower
Stamford Street
London SE1 9LS.
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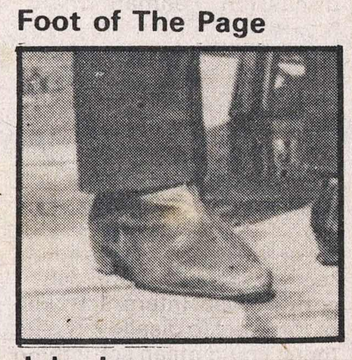

John Lennon

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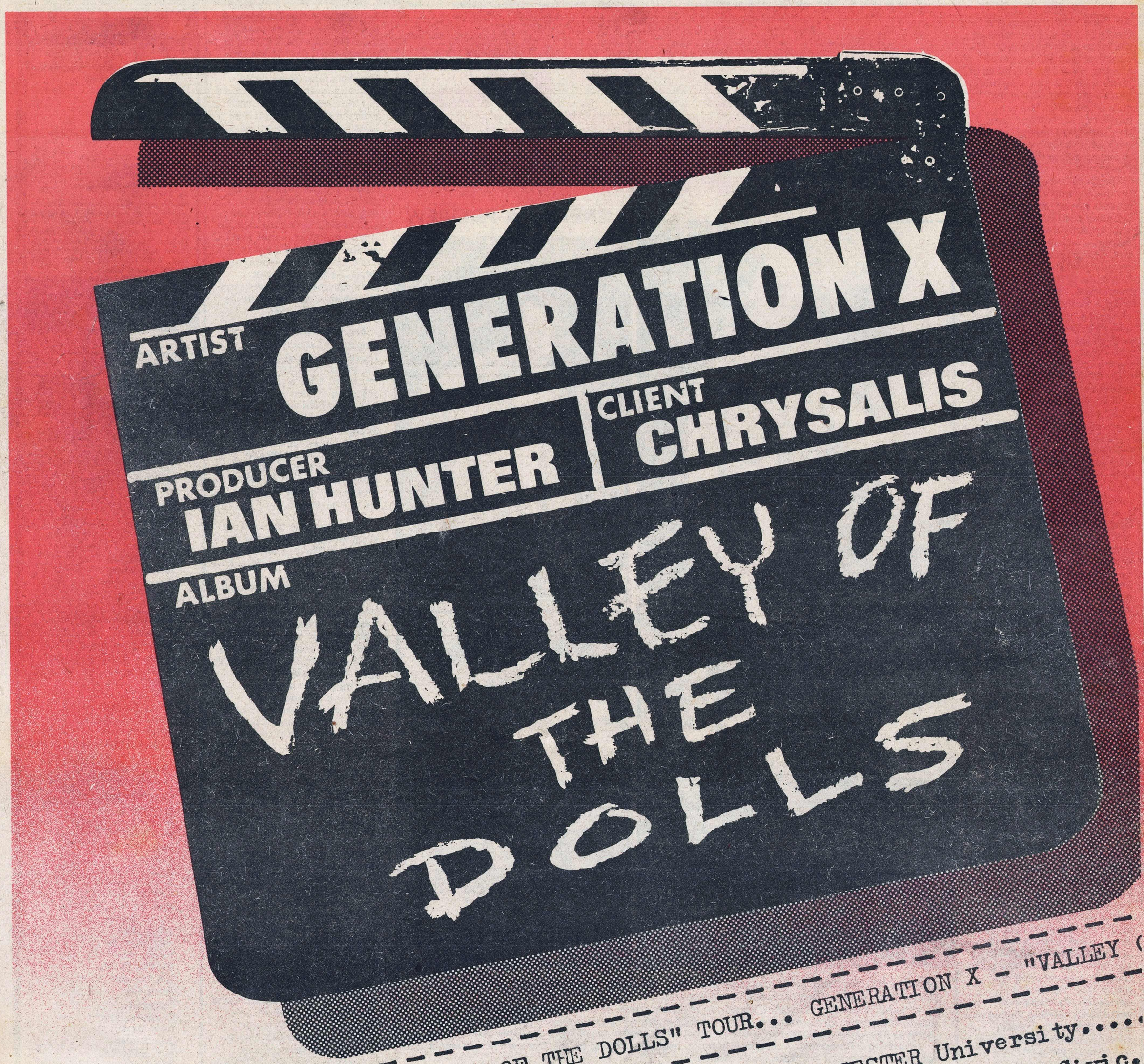
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